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HISTORY

OF

THE RISE AND INFLUENCE

OF THE SPIRIT OF

RATIONALISM IN EUROPE

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY, M.A.

NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1890.

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Lon
2755

PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

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RATIONALISM IN EUROPE.

CHAPTER IV.

(*continued*)

ON PERSECUTION.

PART II.

THE HISTORY OF PERSECUTION.

THE considerations I have adduced in the first part of this chapter will be sufficient to show how injurious have been the effects of the doctrine of exclusive salvation. We have still, however, one consequence to examine, before which all others fade into insignificance. I mean, of course, religious persecution. This, which is perhaps the most fearful of all the evils that men have inflicted upon their fellows, is the direct practical result of the principles we have hitherto considered in their speculative aspect. If men believe with an intense and realising faith that their own view of a disputed question is true beyond all possibility of mistake, if they further believe that those who adopt other views will be doomed by the Almighty to an eternity of misery which, with the same moral disposition but with a different belief, they would have escaped, these men will, sooner or

later, persecute to the full extent of their power. If you speak to them of the physical and mental suffering which persecution produces, or of the sincerity and unselfish heroism of its victims, they will reply that such arguments rest altogether on the inadequacy of your realisation of the doctrine they believe. What suffering that man can inflict can be comparable to the eternal misery of all who embrace the doctrine of the heretic? What claim can human virtues have to our forbearance, if the Almighty punishes the mere profession of error as a crime of the deepest turpitude? If you encountered a lunatic who, in his frenzy, was inflicting on multitudes around him a death of the most prolonged and excruciating agony, would you not feel justified in arresting his career by every means in your power—by taking his life if you could not otherwise attain your object? But if you knew that this man was inflicting not temporal but eternal death, if he was not a guiltless though dangerous madman, but one whose conduct you believed to involve the most heinous criminality, would you not act with still less compunction or hesitation?[1] Arguments from expediency, though they may induce men under some special circumstances to refrain from persecuting, will never make them adopt the principle of toleration. In the first place, those who believe that the religious service of the heretic is an act positively offensive to the Deity will always feel disposed to put down that act if it is in their power, even though they cannot change the

[1] As St. Thomas Aquinas says, 'Si falsarii pecuniæ vel alii malefactores statim per seculares principes juste morti traduntur, multo magis hæretici statim, ex quo de hæresi convincuntur, possunt non solum excommunicari sed et juste occidi.' (*Summa*, pars ii. qu. xi. art. iii.)

mental disposition from which it springs. In the next place, they will soon perceive that the intervention of the civil ruler can exercise almost as much influence upon belief as upon profession. For although there is indeed a certain order and sequence in the history of opinions, as in the phases of civilisation it reflects, which cannot be altogether destroyed, it is not the less true that man can greatly accelerate, retard, or modify its course. The opinions of ninety-nine persons out of every hundred are formed mainly by education, and a Government can decide in whose hands the national education is to be placed, what subjects it is to comprise, and what principles it is to convey. The opinions of the great majority of those who emancipate themselves from the prejudices of their education are the results in a great measure of reading and of discussion, and a Government can prohibit all books and can expel all teachers that are adverse to the doctrines it holds. Indeed, the simple fact of annexing certain penalties to the profession of particular opinions, and rewards to the profession of opposite opinions, while it will undoubtedly make many hypocrites, will also make many converts. For any one who attentively observes the process that is pursued in the formation of opinions must be aware that, even when a train of argument has preceded their adoption, they are usually much less the result of pure reasoning than of the action of innumerable distorting influences which are continually deflecting our judgments. Among these one of the most powerful is self-interest. When a man desires very earnestly to embrace a certain class of doctrines, either in order to join a particular profession, or to please his friends, or to acquire peace

of mind, or to rise in the world, or to gratify his passions, or to gain that intellectual reputation which is sometimes connected with the profession of certain opinions, he will usually attain his desire. He may be firmly resolved to make any sacrifice rather than profess what he does not believe, yet still his affections will endow their objects with a magnetism of which he is perhaps entirely unconscious. He will reason not to ascertain what is true, but to ascertain whether he can conscientiously affirm certain opinions to be true. He will insensibly withdraw his attention from the objections on one side, and will concentrate it with disproportionate energy upon the other. He will preface every conclusion by an argument, but the nature of that argument will be determined by the secret bias of his will. If, then, a Government can act upon the wishes of a people, it can exercise a considerable influence upon their reason.

Such are some of the arguments by which the persecutor in the earlier stages of Christian history might have defended his acts. And surely the experience of later times has fully corroborated his view by showing that, in the great conflicts between argument and persecution, the latter has been continually triumphant. Persecution extirpated Christianity from Japan; it crushed the fair promise of the Albigenses; it rooted out every vestige of Protestantism from Spain. France is still ostensibly, and was long in truth, the leading champion of Catholicity, but the essential Catholicity of France was mainly due to the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. England is justly esteemed the chief pillar of Protestantism, yet the English people remained long poised indecisively between the

two creeds till the skilful policy and the coercive laws of Elizabeth determined its vacillations. At the Reformation almost every Government prohibited one or other religion; and whereas the members of the State religion formed at first but a doubtful and wavering majority, and sometimes not even a majority, a few generations produced substantial unanimity; and since the policy of coercion has been generally abandoned, and the freest scope been given for discussion, the relative position of Protestants and Catholics has not been perceptibly changed.

Before such broad and patent facts as these, the few exceptions that may be adduced can have no great weight, and even those exceptions, when carefully examined, will often be found far less real than is supposed. Thus, for example, the case of Ireland is continually cited. The Irish Catholics, we are told, were subject at first to a system of open plunder, and then to a long detailed legal persecution[1] which was designed to make them abandon their faith. All the paths of honour and wealth were monopolised by Protestants, while shackles of every description hampered the Catholics in all the relations of life. Yet these only clung the closer to their faith on account of the storms that assailed it. That very acute observer, Arthur Young, declared at the close of the penal laws, that the relative proportion of Catholics to Protestants had not been at all reduced —if anything rather the reverse—and that those who denied this admitted that, at the past rate of conversions, 4,000 years would be required to make Ireland

[1] For their details see Parnell, *Penal Laws*. In common parlance, the 'penal laws' date from the treaty of Limerick, but the legislative assaults on Irish Catholicism began with Elizabeth.

Protestant. In the Irish Parliament it was stated that 71 years of the penal system had only produced 4,055 converts.

This statement may at first sight appear to furnish an extremely strong argument, but it completely omits the most important element of Irish ecclesiastical history. In Ireland the old faith marked the division between two races, it was the symbol of the national spirit, it was upheld by all the passions of a great patriotic struggle, and its continuance simply attests the vitality of a political sentiment. When every other northern nation abandoned Catholicism, the Irish still retained it out of antipathy to their oppressors, and in every great insurrection the actuating spirit was mainly political. Of all the outbreaks against the English power, that of 1641 was probably the most passionate and most vindictive. In that rebellion one Englishman of distinction was exempt from the hostility that attached to his race. He was treated with the most respectful and even affectionate deference, and when he died, he was borne to the grave with all the honours the rebel army could afford. That Englishman was Bishop Bedell, the councillor of Sarpi and of De Dominis, and the founder of proselytism in Ireland.[1]

Such was the spirit that was displayed by the Irish Catholics in the midst of one of their most ferocious

[1] The very curious life of Bedell, by his son-in-law Alexander Clogy, which was written in 1641–2, and which formed the basis of the narrative of Burnet, was printed from the MSS. in the British Museum in 1862. We have an amusing instance of the uncompromising Protestantism of Bedell in the fact that when the insurgents who retained him prisoner gave him permission to perform the Anglican service freely with his friends, he availed himself of that permission to celebrate the thanksgiving for the 5th of November.

outbreaks; and surely no one who is acquainted with the history of Ireland since the Union will imagine that the repeal of the persecuting code has in any degree mitigated their zeal. While their influence in the State has been immeasurably augmented, while their number has increased with a rapidity that was only broken by the frightful famine and emigration that more than decimated their ranks, the sectarian spirit that actuates them has become continually more conspicuous. It may indeed be truly said that of all civilised countries Ireland is that in which public opinion is governed most habitually by theological considerations, and in which the most momentous secular interests are most continually subordinated to the conflicts of rival clergy. The causes of this deplorable condition I have not now to investigate. It is sufficient to say that it exists in spite of the abrogation of the persecuting laws. If there was one secular question which the Irish Catholics pursued with an intense and genuine ardour, it was the struggle for the repeal of the Union. For a long series of years they maintained that struggle with a combination of enthusiasm, of perseverance, and of self-sacrifice, such as has been seldom evinced in a political contest, and they invariably based their claim on the broad principle that the form of government in any country should be determined by the majority of its inhabitants. But no sooner had that principle come into collision with the Church, no sooner had its triumph menaced the security of the Vatican, and wrested two provinces from the Pope, than all this was changed. The teaching of Davis and of O'Connell was at once forgotten. The bond that had so long connected the Irish Catholics with liberalism was

broken, and the whole party pressed forward, with an alacrity that would be ludicrous if it were not pitiable, to unite themselves with the most retrogressive politicians in Europe, and to discard and trample on the principles they had so long and so enthusiastically maintained.

These considerations show that the intense energy of Irish Catholicism cannot be altogether attributed to religious persecution. Much the same qualification may be applied to the case of the English dissenters. The Anglican Church, it is sometimes said, persecuted with great cruelty those who separated from her ecclesiastical government; yet, nevertheless, the dissenters became so powerful that they shattered both the Church and the Crown, and brought the king and the Archbishop of Canterbury to the scaffold. But this is a palpable misrepresentation. The extreme servility which the English Church manifested to the most tyrannical of sovereigns, and the bitter persecution it directed against all adverse communions, had together made Puritanism the representative and the symbol of democracy. The rebellion was simply the outburst of political liberalism, intensified, indeed, but by no means created, by the exasperation of the dissenters. It represented the hatred of political tyranny much more than the hatred of episcopacy. After two or three fluctuations a period arrived when the Church of England was greatly depressed, and the Toleration Act was passed, which, though very defective in theory, accorded a large measure of practical liberty to all classes of dissenters. Those who maintain that persecution can only strengthen the system against which it is directed, might have expected that this act would have produced a diminu-

tion of dissent, or, at least, a relaxation of its principles. But the result was precisely opposite. About the time when the act was passed, the dissenters were estimated at rather more than one twenty-third of the population of England; less than a century after they were estimated at one-fourth.[1] In zeal the Methodists will bear comparison with the Puritans, and if the animosity between Anglicans and dissenters is mitigated, this has not been because dissent has been attracted to the Church, but because the Church has been penetrated by the doctrines of dissent.

The foregoing arguments appear to me to prove, not, indeed, that persecution is a good thing, or even that it can invariably effect the object for which it is employed, but that it has, as a matter of fact, exercised an enormous influence over the belief of mankind. The two main causes of theological changes seem to be the appearance from time to time of great religious teachers, and the succession of the phases of civilisation. The first cast abroad the seeds of religious truth; the second provide the different atmospheres by which those seeds are in turn developed. But, while this law is producing a continual modification of opinions, which is more or less felt through the entire community, it leaves free scope for the operation of many minor influences, which cause in the same period a considerable diversity of realised belief, and a still greater diversity of profession. Of these influences the intervention of government is probably the most powerful. It is certainly far more powerful than any direct polemical discussion. Millions of devoted Catholics and millions of devoted

[1] See a note in Buckle, *History of Civilisation*, vol. i. p. 385.

Protestants would, at the present hour, repudiate indignantly their present belief but for the coercive enactments of former rulers; and there is scarcely a country in which the prevailing faith is not in some degree due to bygone legislation. But whether or not this be true is, in reality, immaterial to my argument; for, however strongly the reader may deny the efficacy of persecution upon belief, it is certain that until lately it was deemed indisputable. It is also certain that, in ages when the doctrine of exclusive salvation is fully realised, the spirit of faith will be so exalted that the ruler will never question for a moment the justice of his belief. Now, when men are firmly convinced that the highest of all possible objects is to promote the interests of their faith, and that by the employment of force they can most fully attain that object, their persecution will be measured by their power and their zeal.[1]

These are the general logical antecedents of persecution, and they are quite sufficient to account for all its atrocities, without imputing any sordid motives to the persecutor. There is, however, one other consideration that exercised a very important influence in the same direction—I mean the example of the Jewish legislators. When we now read of such scenes as the massacres of Canaan, the slaughter of the priests of Baal, or the forcible reforms of Josiah, they can scarcely be said to present them-

[1] This was the opinion expressed by Charles James Fox. 'The only foundation for toleration,' he said, 'is a degree of scepticism, and without it there can be none. For if a man believes in the saving of souls, he must soon think about the means; and if by cutting off one generation he can save many future ones from hell fire, it is his duty to do it.' (Rogers, *Recollections*, p. 49.)

selves to the mind as having any very definite application to the present. Those who do not regard them as the natural products of an imperfect civilisation, regard them at least as belonging to a dispensation so entirely exceptional as to be removed altogether from the ordinary conditions of society. But in the early Church, and in the sixteenth century, they were looked upon in a very different light. The relations of an established religion to the State were mainly derived from the Old Testament. The Jewish was deemed a type of the Christian Church, and the policy that was commended in the one was regarded as at least not blamable in the other. Now the Levitical code was the first code of religious persecution that had ever appeared among mankind. It pronounced idolatry to be not simply an error, but a crime, and a crime that must be expiated with blood.[1]

The opinions of the Fathers on the subject were divided. Those who wrote when a pagan or heretical power was supreme were the champions of toleration. Those who wrote when the Church was in the ascendency usually inclined to persecution. Tertullian during the pagan[2] and Hilary of Poitiers during the

[1] On the influence of this command on Christian persecution, see Bayle, *Contrains-les d'entrer*, pt. ii. ch. iv., and some striking remarks in Renan, *Vie de Jésus*, pp. 412–413; to which I may add as an illustration the following passage of Simancas:—'Hæretici pertinaces publice in conspectu populi comburendi sunt; et id fieri solet extra portas civitatis: quemadmodum olim, in *Deut.* cap. xvii., idolatra educebatur ad portas civitatis, et lapidibus obruebatur.' (*De Cathol. Instit.* p. 375.) Taylor, in noticing this argument, finely says that Christ, by refusing to permit his apostles to call down fire like Elias on the misbeliever, clearly indicated his separation from the intolerance of Judaism. (*Liberty of Prophesying*, sec. 22.)

[2] Apol. cap. xxiv.

Arian[1] persecution, were the most conspicuous advocates of the duty of absolute and complete toleration, and several passages tending, though less strongly, in the same direction, emanated from other Fathers during seasons of adversity.[2] It should, however, be mentioned that Lactantius, in the reign of Constantine, asserted the iniquity of persecution quite as strongly as any previous writer,[3] and also that the later Fathers, while defending the milder forms of

[1] Ad Auxentium.

[2] The reader may find a full statement of the passages from the Fathers favourable to toleration in Whitby, *On Laws against Heretics* (1723, published anonymously); Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*; Bayle, *Contrains-les d'entrer*, and many other books. The other side of the question has been developed, among other writers, by Palmer, *On the Church*; Muzzarelli, Simancas, Paramo, and all the other old writers on the Inquisition. There is, I think, an impartial view of the whole subject in Milman, *History of Christianity*. See, too, Blackstone's *Commentaries*, b. iv. ch. iv.

[3] *Inst.* lib. v. c. xx. Lactantius embraced Christianity during the persecution of Diocletian, but it appears almost certain that his *Institutions* were mainly written, or at least published, at Trèves during the reign of Constantine, and he never abandoned the tolerant maxims he proclaimed. This was especially creditable to him, as he was tutor to the son of Constantine, and consequently singularly tempted to avail himself of the arm of power. Unfortunately, this very eloquent writer, who was certainly one of the ablest in the early Church, possessed comparatively little influence on account of his passion for paradox. He maintained that no Christian might engage in warfare, or execute a capital sentence; he was one of the strongest assertors of the opinion that God the Father had a figure (a controversy raised by Origen), and he was accused of denying the personality of the Holy Ghost. 'Lactantius,' said Jerome, 'quasi quidam fluvius eloquentiæ Tullianæ, utinam tam nostra confirmare potuisset, quam facile aliena destruxit!' (*Epist.* lib. ii. epist. 14.) The works of Lactantius were condemned by a council presided over by Pope Gelasius in the 5th century. See Alexandri *Hist. Ecclesiastica* (Paris, 1699), tom. iv. pp. 100–103; Ampère, *Hist. littéraire de la France*, tom. i. pp. 218–223. Some of the peculiar notions of Lactantius appeared at a later period among the Waldenses.

coercion, seldom or never wished death to be the penalty of heresy. In this respect the orthodox seem to have been for a time honourably distinguished from the Arians. On one occasion in the reign of the Arian emperor Valens, no less than eighty Catholic ecclesiastics are said to have been imprisoned in a ship at sea and treacherously burnt.[1]

Still, from the very moment the Church obtained civil power under Constantine, the general principle of coercion was admitted and acted on both against the Jews, the heretics, and the pagans. The first had at this time become especially obnoxious, on account of a strong Judaising movement which had produced one or two heresies and many apostasies, and they were also accused of assailing 'with stones and other manifestations of rage' those who abandoned their faith. Constantine provided against these evils by a law, in which he condemned to the flames any Jew who threw stones at a Christian convert, and at the same time rendered it penal for any Christian to become a Jew.[2] Against the Arian and Donatist heretics, his measures were more energetic. Their churches were destroyed, their assemblies were forbidden, their bishops banished, their writings burnt, and all who concealed those writings threatened with death.

[1] Socrates, lib. iv. c. xvi. The Donatists were also fierce persecutors, and Nestorius showed his sentiments clearly enough when he said to the Emperor, 'give me the earth purged from heretics, and I will give you heaven.' The Spanish Arians seem to have originated the intense intolerance that has been perpetuated from generation to generation in Spain.

[2] *Cod. Theod.* lib. xvi. tit. 8. The apostate 'sustinebit meritas pœnas.' Constantius afterwards made the penalty confiscation of goods. A Jew who married a Christian incurred the penalty of death. See, on this department of legislation, Bedarride, *Hist. des Juifs*, pp. 16–20.

Some of the Donatists were actually condemned to death, but the sentence was remitted, and any blood that was at this time shed seems to have been due to the excessive turbulence of the Circumcelliones, a sect of Donatists whose principles and acts appear to have been perfectly incompatible with the tranquillity of the State.[1]

The policy of Constantine towards the pagans is involved in considerable obscurity, and I have already in a former chapter sketched its principal features. During the first years of his reign, while the ascendency of Christianity was very doubtful, and while the pagan Licinius was still his colleague in the empire, he showed marked tolerance towards the adherents of the old superstitions, and when his law against private or magical sacrifices had created a considerable panic among them, he endeavoured to remove the impression by a proclamation in which he authorised in the most express terms the worship in the temples.[2] Besides this, he still retained the old imperial title of Pontifex Maximus,[3] and does not appear to have altogether discarded the functions it

[1] Milman, *History of Christianity*, vol. ii. pp. 372–375. See also the review of these measures in Palmer, *On the Church*, vol. ii. p. 250. The first law that has come down to us, in which the penalty of death is annexed to the simple profession of a heresy, is law 9 *De Hæreticis* in the Theodosian Code. It was made by Theodosius the Great, and was applicable only to some sects of Manichæans. It is worthy of notice that this is also the first law in which we meet the title of 'Inquisitors of the Faith.' Optatus in the reign of Constantine advocated the massacre of the Donatists on the ground of the Old Testament precedents (see Milman).

[2] 'Addite aras publicas atque delubra, et consuetudinis vestræ celebrate solemnia: nec enim prohibemus preteritæ usurpationis officia libera luce tractari.'—*Cod. Th.* lib. ix. tit. 16, cc. i. ii.

[3] The first emperor who refused it was Gratian (Zosimus, book iv.).

implied. As, however, his position became more strong, and especially after the defeat of Licinius in 324, he gradually changed his policy. By forbidding the prefects and governors to pay any respect to the idols, he placed the government of the provinces in Christian hands.[1] About 330, he went still further, and if we believe the unanimous testimony of the ecclesiastical historians, he prohibited the temple worship. This enactment has not come down to us, but the prohibition is expressly and unequivocally asserted by both Eusebius, Sozomen, and Theodoret,[2] and Libanius tells us that the penalty of holding converse with the old gods was death.[3] Eusebius notices some temples that were at this time closed, and speaks of similar measures as being very common; but, at the same time, we have decisive evidence that the pagan worship was connived at in many and probably most parts of the empire, that temples were dedicated, and the ceremonies performed without molestation or concealment.[4] It is

[1] Eusebius, *Vita Const.* lib. ii. cc. xliv. xlv.

[2] See Eusebius, *Vita Const.* lib. ii. cc. xliv. xlv., lib. iv. c. xxiii.; Theodoret, lib. vi. c. xxi.; Sozomen, lib. iii. c. xvii. Eusebius repeats this assertion over and over again; See Milman, *History of Christianity*, vol. ii. pp. 460–464 (ed. 1840).

[3] Speaking of his youth, Libanius says: 'Plus apud Deos quam apud homines in terra conversabatur, tametsi lex prohibéret, quam audenti violare capitis pœna fuit. Verumtamen cum illis ipsis vitam agens et iniquam legem et impium legislatorem deridebat.' (*De Vita sua*, Libanii *Opera* (ed. 1627), vol. ii. p. 11.) However, in his oration *Pro Templis*, Libanius says distinctly that Constantine did not disturb the worship of the temples. It is hard to reconcile these two passages with each other, and the last with the statements of Eusebius; but I suppose the fact is that the law was made, but was generally suffered to be inoperative.

[4] See a great deal of evidence of this in Beugnot, *Décadence du Polythéisme.* But it is absurd to speak of Constantine, as M. Beugnot does, as an apostle of tolerance. Conni-

only by taking into account the extreme laxity of the administration of law at this period of Roman history, that we can estimate aright the position of the pagans. The government was strongly hostile to their faith, but was as yet restrained by their numbers; the habitual policy was therefore gradually to destroy their political importance, and by laws directed ostensibly against magic to suppress those portions of worship which were not indeed the essentials, but formed what may be called the religious luxuries of paganism. Other and more stringent laws were made, but they were generally in abeyance, or at least their execution depended upon political circumstances, or upon the disposition of the governors. Constantius made laws distinctly prohibiting every form of pagan worship,[1] but yet there is no fact more certain than that this worship continued till the period of Theodosius.[2]

It is not necessary to follow in detail the persecu-

vance,' as Burke once said, 'is the relaxation of tyranny, and not the definition of liberty.' One of Constantine's proclamations of tolerance seems to have been posterior to the prohibition of public sacrifices.

[1] *Cod. Th.* xvi. 10, 2–4. The terms of one of these laws seem to imply that Constantine had made a similar enactment: 'Cesset superstitio: sacrificiorum aboleatur insania. Nam quicunque *contra legem divi Principis Parentis nostri*, et hanc nostræ mansuetudinis jussionem, ausus fuerit sacrificia celebrare, competens in eum vindicta et præsens sententia exeratur.' For a full discussion of this very perplexing subject, see Milman, *Hist. of Christianity*, and Gibbon, ch. xxi.

[2] Thus, for example, the pagan Zosimus tells us expressly that in the beginning of the reign of Theodosius his coreligionists were still at liberty to worship in the temples. The history is in a great measure a repetition of that of the persecution which the Christians had themselves endured. Generally they had been allowed freely to celebrate their worship, but from time to time, either through popular indignation or imperial suspicions, there were sudden outbursts of fearful persecution.

ting laws of the first century of the Church's power, and indeed such a task would be intolerably tedious on account of the activity that was displayed in this department of legislation. The Theodosian code, which was compiled under Theodosius the younger, contains no less than sixty-six enactments against heretics, besides many others against pagans, Jews, apostates, and magicians. It is sufficient to say that at first the Arian measures seem to have been rather more severe than the Catholic ones, but that the scope of the latter was steadily enlarged, and their severity increased, till they reached a point that has seldom been surpassed. First the pagans were deprived of offices in the State; then their secret sacrifices were prohibited; then every kind of divination was forbidden; then the public sacrifices were suppressed; and finally the temples were destroyed, their images broken, and the entire worship condemned.[1] The enforcement of these measures in the country districts was the last, the most difficult, and the most melancholy scene of the drama. For in those days, when means of communication were very few and ignorance very general, it was quite possible for a religious movement to gain a complete ascendency in the towns while the peasants were scarcely aware of its existence. In their calm retreats the paroxysms of change were seldom felt. They still continued with unfaltering confidence to worship the old gods when a new faith had attracted the educated to its banner, or when scepticism was withering the beliefs of the past. Multitudes had probably scarcely realised the existence of Christianity when

[1] See the laws *De Templis*.

the edict arrived which doomed their temples to destruction. Libanius, who, as the minister of Julian, had exhibited a spirit of tolerance even more remarkable than that of his master, pleaded the peasants' cause with courage, dignity, and pathos. The temple, he said, was to them the very eye of nature, the symbol and manifestation of a present Deity, the solace of all their troubles, the holiest of all their joys. If it were overthrown, their dearest associations would be annihilated. The tie that linked them to the dead would be severed. The poetry of life, the consolation of labour, the source of faith, would be destroyed.[1] But these pleas were unavailing. Under Theodosius the Great all the temples were razed to the ground, and all forms of pagan and heretical worship absolutely prohibited.[2]

Such was the persecuting spirit displayed by the Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries. It is both interesting and important to observe how far it was the consequence of a theological developement, and what were the stages of that developement. The noble protests against persecution which the persecuted prelates had uttered form indeed a striking contrast to the measures I have related; but, unfortunately, new circumstances produce new opinions, and when the bias of the will is altered, a change will soon be manifested in the judgment. Still, in justice to the persecutors, it must be admitted that

[1] *Pro Templis.*

[2] It is said, however, that, notwithstanding these laws, the Novatians (probably on account of the extremely slight difference that separated them from the orthodox) were allowed to celebrate their worship till A.D. 525, when the Bishop of Rome succeeded in procuring their suppression. (Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, epistle dedicatory.)

they were but the logical exponents of principles that had before existed in the Church. These principles were the doctrine of exclusive salvation, and the conceptions of the guilt of error and of ecclesiastical authority. It is very remarkable, too, that even before Constantius some theologians had begun to deduce their rule of conduct towards heretics from the penal enactments of the Levitical law. To excommunicate the heretic was, they said, to consign him to eternal damnation; and they were justified in inflicting this frightful punishment upon those who rebelled against their authority, because the ancient idolater had been punished with death.[1] From such a doctrine there was but a step to persecution. The premises were already formed; it only remained to draw the obvious conclusion.

There cannot, I think, be much doubt that the minds of the leaders of the Church were so prepared by these modes of thought that the eulogies which Eusebius unceasingly lavishes upon the persecuting

[1] 'Neither let those who refuse to obey their bishops and priests think within themselves that they are in the way of life and of salvation, for the Lord God says in Deuteronomy, "Whoever will act presumptuously, and will not hear the priest or the judge, whoever he may be in those days, he shall die, and the people will hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously." God commanded those to be slain who would not obey the priests or the judges set over them for a time. Then, indeed, they were slain with the sword while the carnal circumcision still remained; but now, since the spiritual circumcision has begun amid the servants of God, the proud and contumacious are killed when they are cast out of the Church. For they cannot live without it; for the house of God is one, and there can be salvation for no one except in the Church.' (Cyprian, *Epis.*, Book i. ep. 11.) That excommunication is a severer penalty than death and that the Church, having the power of inflicting the first, may also inflict the second, was one of the arguments of Bellarmine in favour of persecution, and was answered by Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, sec. 14.

edicts of Constantine were a faithful expression of their sentiments. But the writer who was destined to consolidate the whole system of persecution, to furnish the arguments of all its later defenders, and to give to it the sanction of a name that long silenced every pleading of mercy, and became the glory and the watchword of every persecutor, was unquestionably Augustine, on whom more than on any other theologian—more perhaps even than on Dominic and Innocent—rests the responsibility of this fearful curse. A sensualist and a Manichæan, a philosopher and a theologian, a saint of the most tender and exquisite piety, and a supporter of atrocious persecution, the life of this Father exhibits a strange instance of the combination of the most discordant agencies to the developement of a single mind, and of the influence of that mind over the most conflicting interests. Neither the unbridled passions of his youth, nor the extravagances of the heresy he so long maintained, could cloud the splendour of his majestic intellect, which was even then sweeping over the whole field of knowledge, and acquiring in the most unpropitious spheres new elements of strength. In the arms of the frail beauties of Carthage, he learned to touch the chords of passion with consummate skill; and the subtleties of Persian metaphysics, the awful problems of the origin of evil and of the essence of the soul which he vainly sought to fathom, gave him a sense of the darkness around us that coloured every portion of his teaching. The weight and compass of his genius, his knowledge both of men and of books, a certain aroma of sanctity that imparted an inexpressible charm to all his later writings, and a certain impetuosity of character that overbore every obstacle,

soon made him the master intellect of the Church. Others may have had a larger share in the construction of her formularies—no one since the days of the apostles infused into her a larger measure of his spirit. He made it his mission to map out her theology with inflexible precision, to develope its principles to their full consequences, and to co-ordinate its various parts into one authoritative and symmetrical whole. Impatient of doubt, he shrank from no conclusion, however unpalatable; he seemed to exult in trampling human instincts in the dust, and in accustoming men to accept submissively the most revolting tenets. He was the most staunch and enthusiastic defender of all those doctrines that grow out of the habits of mind that lead to persecution. No one else had developed so fully the material character of the torments of hell, no one else had plunged so deeply into the speculations of predestinarianism, very few had dwelt so emphatically on the damnation of the unbaptised. For a time he shrank from, and even condemned, persecution; but he soon perceived in it the necessary consequence of his principles. He recanted his condemnation; he flung his whole genius into the cause; he recurred to it again and again, and he became the framer and the representative of the theology of intolerance.[1]

Strange indeed has been the destiny of this man! The most illustrious of his contemporaries, in a few centuries, lost their ascendency. Their names, indeed, still continued in honour, their works were read by monkish scholars, but changing modes of thought

[1] See his *Retract.* lib. ii. c. v.; *Epist.* xciii. (in some editions xlviii.) cxxvii. clxxxv.; *Contra Gaudentium*, c. xxv.; *Contra Epist. Parmeniani*, c. vii. There are many other passages on the subject scattered through his writings.

and feeling soon isolated them from the sympathies of mankind. Alone by the power of his genius, Augustine traversed the lapse of ages with unfading influence; but he survived to be the watchword of the most opposing doctrines, the promoter alike of the best and worst sentiments of our nature. From his teaching concerning imputed righteousness, predestinarianism, and good works, the Protestants drew their most powerful weapons. In the intolerant rigidity of his doctrines, in his exaltation of authority, and in the imperious character of his genius, Catholicism recognised her most faithful type. Both sects found in his writings the purest expressions of their religious sentiments, and both sheltered their intolerance beneath his name.

The arguments by which Augustine supported persecution were, for the most part, those which I have already stated. Some of them were drawn from the doctrine of exclusive salvation, and others from the precedents of the Old Testament. It was merciful, he contended, to punish heretics, even by death, if this could save them or others from the eternal suffering that awaited the unconverted. Heresy was described in Scripture as a kind of adultery; it was the worst species of murder, being the murder of souls; it was also a form of blasphemy; and on all these grounds might justly be punished. If the New Testament contained no examples of the apostles employing force, this was simply because in their time no prince had embraced Christianity. But had not Elijah slaughtered with his own hand the prophets of Baal? Did not Hezekiah, and Josiah, and the king of Nineveh, and Nebuchadnezzar after his conversion, destroy by force idolatry within their dominions; and

were they not expressly commended for their piety? St. Augustine also seems to have originated the application of the words, 'Compel them to enter in,' to religious persecution.[1]

It is, however, worthy of remark, that although Augustine defended the measures that had been taken against the Donatists, and although he maintained that heresy was the worst of crimes, and that it should be punished according to its enormity, he still, with an amiable inconsistency, exerted himself much to prevent the penalty from being capital. He exhorted, he even commanded as a bishop, those in authority to restrict it to banishment; he threatened, that if they refused to do so, the bishops would cease to inform against heretics; and he laboured not unsuccessfully to save the lives of some who were condemned.[2] In this respect the manner in which heretics and pagans were treated presents a remarkable contrast. In a passage which occurs in one of his letters to the Donatists, St. Augustine informs us of

[1] *Epist.* l. *Bonifacio.*

[2] See especially *Epist.* c. clviii. clix. clx. On the other hand, Augustine bases the right of punishing heresy on the enormity of the crime, which he considered greater than any other. (*Contra Gaudentium*, lib. i. c. xix.) He assimilates heresy to blasphemy, and says that 'blasphemy is justly punished by death. (*Epist.* cv., otherwise clxvi.) He adduces as applicable precedents all the worst Old Testament persecutions, and he defends the condemnation of some Donatists to death by Constantine, on the ground of justice, though he applauds on the ground of mercy the remission of the sentence. (*Contra Parmenianum*, lib. i. c. viii.) His general view seems to have been that heretics might justly be punished by death, but that the orthodox should not exact strict justice. However, he vacillated a good deal, and both moderate and extreme persecutors find much in their defence in his writings. Religious liberty he emphatically cursed. 'Quid est enim pejor, mors animæ quam libertas erroris?' (*Epist.* clxvi.)

two striking facts. The first is, that, in his time, the sentence of death was incurred by any one who celebrated the rites of the religion which had a few centuries before been universal in the empire. The second is, that this sentence was unanimously applauded in the Christian Church.[1]

The reluctance of the clergy to sanction the death of heretics for a long time coexisted with the most earnest desire to suppress their worship by force, and to banish their teachers from the empire. The first execution of heretics in which ecclesiastics took any part seems to have been in A.D. 385, when some Priscillianists were put to death at the instigation of two obscure bishops named Ursatius and Ithacus. St. Ambrose, though one of the most active in procuring the suppression of the Jewish and pagan worship, protested strongly against this act; and St. Martin of Tours denounced it with almost passionate vehemence as an atrocious crime, and refused to hold any communion with the offending bishops.[2] The indignation that was excited on this occasion resulted, perhaps, hardly so much from the fact that heretics had been put to death, as from the part the bishops had taken in the transaction; for from an early period there was an opinion diffused through the Church, of which Tertullian and Lactantius were the principal

[1] 'Quis enim nostrum, quis vestrum non laudat leges ab imperatoribus datas contra sacrificia paganorum? Et certe longe ibi pœna severior constituta est; illius quippe impietatis capitale supplicium est.' (*Epist.* xciii., in some editions xcviii.) See Gibbon, ch. xxviii.

[2] Ampère, *Hist. littéraire de la France*, tom. i. pp. 310, 320; Milman, vol. iii. p. 60; Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, sec. 14. St. Martin, however, was one of the most active in destroying the pagan temples, and was accustomed in that employment to range over his diocese at the head of a perfect army of monks. (See Gibbon,

exponents, that a Christian should under no circumstances slay his fellow-men, either by bringing a capital charge, or by acting as a judge, a soldier, or an executioner. When the triumph of Christianity had been attained, it was of course necessary that this rule—which, indeed, had never been generally adopted in its full stringency—should be relaxed as regards laymen, but it still continued in the case of priests. All ecclesiastics who delivered up a culprit to the civil power, without supplicating the judges that he should not be punished by death or mutilation, were regarded as guilty of a gross irregularity, and were in consequence liable to ecclesiastical censures. At first this rule was the expression of a pure philanthropy, and was intended to save the life of the accused, but it at last degenerated into an act of the most odious hypocrisy. Boniface VIII. decided that a bishop might safely deliver up a culprit, though he was certain his intercession would not be attended to; and the same form of supplication continued to be employed by the Inquisitors, though they had themselves condemned the heretic to death, and though Innocent VIII. had excommunicated any magistrate who either altered their sentence, or delayed more than six days in carrying it into execution.[1]

During the latter half of the fourth century, there

[1] The history of this has been written in a very striking book called "*La Tolérance ecclésiastique et civile*, by Thadeus de Trautsmandorff. The author was a canon of Olmutz, and afterwards Bishop of Königgratz in Bohemia. The work appeared in Latin, at Pavia, in 1783, and was translated into French in 1796. It is one of the most remarkable books in favour of tolerance produced by any priest in the 18th century. See, too, on the form of intercession employed by the inquisitors, Limborch, *Historia Inquisitionis* (Amsterdam, 1692), pp. 365–367, 372.)

were two causes which contributed especially to the increased severity of the persecution. The first was the great developement of the corporate action of the clergy, as evinced by the multitude of councils. A large proportion of these, and among others those of Ephesus and Constantinople, which were esteemed œcumenical, called upon the civil power to banish or otherwise punish the heretics,[1] and their decrees had a considerable influence upon the government. The second cause was the establishment and rapid growth of the monastic system, which called into existence a body of men who, in self-denial, in singleness of purpose, in heroic courage, and, at the same time, in merciless fanaticism, have seldom been surpassed. Abandoning every tie of home and friendship, discarding all the luxuries and most of what are deemed the necessaries of life, scourging and macerating their bodies, living in filth and loneliness and desolation, wandering half-starved and half-naked through the deserts with the wild beasts for their only companions, the early monks almost extinguished every natural sentiment, and emancipated themselves as far as is possible from the conditions of humanity.[2] Ambition, and wealth, and ease, and all the motives that tell most powerfully upon mankind, were to them unmeaning words. No reward could bribe them, no danger could appal them, no affection could move them. They had learned to embrace misery with a passionate love. They enjoyed a ghastly pleasure in multiplying forms of loathsome penance, and in trampling upon every natural desire. Their imagina-

[1] On the influence of the Councils, see Palmer *On the Church*, vol. ii. p. 333; Muzarelli, *Sur l'Inquisition*.

[2] *Vide* St. Jerome, passim.

tions, distempered by self-inflicted sufferings, peopled the solitude with congenial spirits, and transported them at will beyond the horizon of the grave. To promote the interests of their Church was the only passion that remained, and to gratify it there was no suffering that they were not ready to endure or to inflict. The pagan historians have given us a graphic description of the zeal they manifested in destroying the temples. Sometimes a bishop led the enterprise from which the civil authorities recoiled, and one prelate, named Marcellus, perished in a conflict with the peasants who were defending with despairing courage the altars of their gods. A few years of such zeal sufficed, and paganism as a distinct system perished in the empire.

After the suppression of paganism in the Roman Empire, a period of many centuries occurred during which religious persecution was very rare. The principle was indeed fully admitted, and whenever the occasion called for it, it was applied; but heresies scarcely ever appeared, and the few that arose were exceedingly insignificant. A few heretics whose doctrines were merged in the charge of magic, two or three who were burnt by Alexius Comnenus, some more who were burnt in France in the beginning of the eleventh century, and some Cathari and sectaries with kindred views who were burnt at Cologne [1] or

[1] Natalis Alexander, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, tom. vii. p. 337. The following are all the cases Simancas could collect: 'Antiquissima est pœna ignis adversus impios et hæreticos, ut ex actis Chalcedonensis concilii satis constare potest. Illic enim episcopus Alexandrinus dixisse traditur: "Si Eutyches præter dogmata ecclesiæ sapit non solum pœna dignus est sed et igne." Anatolium quoque hæreticum igni vivum combusserunt, ut Nicephorus prodidit, lib. xviii. Eccl. Hist. c. 4. Gregorius quoque, lib. i. Dialogorum, refert Basilium magum Romæ

in Italy, seem to have been all or nearly all who perished for heresy during several centuries before the Albigenses. Catholicism was then perfectly in accordance with the intellectual wants of Europe. It was not a tyranny, for the intellectual latitude it permitted was fully commensurate with the wants of the people. It was not a sect or an isolated influence acting in the midst of Europe and forming one weight in the balance of power, but rather an all-pervasive energy animating and vivifying the whole social system. A certain unity of type was then manifested, which has never been restored. The corporations, the guilds, the feudal system, the monarchy, the social habits of the people, their laws, their studies, their very amusements, all grew out of ecclesiastical teaching, embodied ecclesiastical modes of thought, exhibited the same general tendencies, and presented countless points of contact or of analogy. All of them were strictly congruous. The Church was the very heart of Christendom, and the spirit that radiated from her penetrated into all the relations of life, and coloured the institutions it did not create. In such a condition of society, heresies were almost impossible. For while the particular form that a heresy assumes may be dependent upon circumstances that

fuisse combustum et rem gestam laudat. Et propter impiam atque scelestam disciplinam Templarii concremati fuerunt. . . . Et Basilius hæreticus communi suffragio combustus fuit, sicuti Zonaras retulit in imperio Alexii Comneni; alibi quoque hæretici jam olim vivi cremati sunt, quemadmodum Paulus Æmilius, lib. vi. de Rebus Francorum, retulit. Item constitutionibus Siculus cavetur ut vivi hæretici in conspectu populi comburantur, flammarum commissi judicio. Quod legibus quoque Hispanis constitutum et consuetudine jam pridem receptum est' (*De Catholicis Institutionibus* [Romæ, 1575], pp. 363, 364).

are peculiar to the heresiarch, the existence and success of heretical teaching always proves that the tone of thought or measure of probability prevailing at the time has begun to diverge from the tone of thought or measure of probability of orthodoxy. As long as a church is so powerful as to form the intellectual condition of the age, to supply the standing-point from which every question is viewed, its authority will never be disputed. It will reflect so perfectly the general conceptions of the people, that no difficulties of detail will seriously disturb it. This ascendency was gained by mediæval Catholicity more completely than by any other system before or since, and the stage of civilisation that resulted from it was one of the most important in the evolutions of society. By consolidating the heterogeneous and anarchical elements that succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire; by infusing into Christendom the conception of a bond of unity that is superior to the divisions of nationhood, and of a moral tie that is superior to force; by softening slavery into serfdom, and preparing the way for the ultimate emancipation of labour, Catholicism laid the very foundations of modern civilisation. Herself the most admirable of all organisations, there was formed beneath her influence a vast network of organisations, political, municipal, and social, which supplied a large proportion of the materials of almost every modern structure.

But though in many respects admirable and useful, this stage was manifestly transitory. It could only exist by the suppression of all critical spirit, by a complete paralysis of the speculative faculties. It was associated with conceptions of the government of the universe, the history of the past, and the prospects

of the future, that were fundamentally false, and must necessarily have been dissolved by advancing knowledge. As soon as the revival of learning commenced, as soon as the first pulsations of intellectual life were felt, the movement of decomposition began. From that moment Catholicism, aiming at an impossible immobility, became the principle of retrogression. From that moment she employed all the resources that her position and her great services had given her, to arrest the expansion of the human mind, to impede the circulation of knowledge, and to quench the lamp of liberty in blood. It was in the course of the twelfth century that this change was manifested, and in the beginning of the next century the system of coercion was matured. In 1208, Innocent III. established the Inquisition. In 1209, De Montfort began the massacre of the Albigenses. In 1215, the Fourth Council of the Lateran enjoined all rulers, 'as they desired to be esteemed faithful, to swear a public oath that they would labour earnestly, and to the full extent of their power, to exterminate from their dominions all those who were branded as heretics by the Church.' [1]

It is in itself evident, and it is abundantly proved by history, that the virulence theologians will display

[1] The fourth Council of the Lateran is esteemed œcumenical in the Church of Rome, and exercised very great influence both on this account and because it was the council which first defined the doctrine of transubstantiation. Its decree on Persecution, however, had been anticipated by the Council of Avignon, in 1209, which enjoined all bishops to call upon the civil power to exterminate heretics (Rohrbacher, *Hist. de l'Église catholique*, tom. xvii. p. 220). The bull of Innocent III. threatened any prince who refused to extirpate heretics from his realm with excommunication, and with the forfeiture of his dominions. See the text in Eymericus, *Directorium Inquisitorum* (Romæ, 1578), p. 60.

towards those who differ from them, will depend chiefly on the degree in which the dogmatic side of their system is developed. 'See how these Christians love one another,' was the just and striking exclamation of the heathen in the first century. 'There are no wild beasts so ferocious as Christians who differ concerning their faith,' was the equally striking and probably equally just exclamation of the heathen in the fourth century. And the reason of this difference is manifest. In the first century there was, properly speaking, scarcely any theology, no system of elaborate dogmas authoritatively imposed upon the conscience. Neither the character of the union of two natures in Christ, nor the doctrine of the atonement, nor the extent of the authority of the Church, had been determined with precision, and the whole stress of religious sentiment was directed towards the worship of a moral ideal, and the cultivation of moral qualities. But in the fourth century men were mainly occupied with innumerable subtle and minute questions of theology, to which they attributed a transcendent importance, and which in a great measure diverted their minds from moral considerations. However strongly the Homoousians and Homoiousians were opposed to each other on other points, they were at least perfectly agreed that the adherents of the wrong vowel could not possibly get to heaven, and that the highest conceivable virtues were futile when associated with error. In the twelfth century, when persecution recommenced, the dogmatic or ecclesiastical element had been still further aggrandised by the immense developement of ecclesiastical ceremonies, and the violence with which it was defended was proportionally unscrupulous.

The reluctance to shed blood which had so honourably distinguished the Fathers completely passed away, or, if we find any trace of it, it is only in the quibble by which the Church referred the execution of her mandates to the civil magistrate, who, as we have seen, was not permitted to delay that execution for more than six days, under pain of excommunication. Almost all Europe, for many centuries, was inundated with blood, which was shed at the direct instigation or with the full approval of the ecclesiastical authorities, and under the pressure of a public opinion that was directed by the Catholic clergy, and was the exact measure of their influence.

That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realise their sufferings. Llorente, who had free access to the archives of the Spanish Inquisition, assures us that by that tribunal alone more than 31,000 persons were burnt, and more than 290,000 condemned to punishments less severe than death.[1] The number of those who were put to death

[1] Llorente, *Hist. de l'Inquisition*, tom. iv. pp. 271, 272. This does not include those who perished by the branches of the Spanish Inquisition in Mexico, Lima, Carthagena, the Indies, Sicily, Sardinia, Oran, and Malta. Llorente having been himself at one time secretary in the Inquisition, and having during the occupation by the French had access to all the secret papers of the tribunal, will always be the highest authority. One would fain hope, however (and it is very probable), that these figures are overstated, and

for their religion in the Netherlands alone, in the reign of Charles V., has been estimated by a very high authority at 50,000,[1] and at least half as many perished under his son.[2] And when to these memorable instances we add the innumerable less conspicuous executions that took place, from the victims of Charlemagne to the freethinkers of the seventeenth century, when we recollect that after the mission of Dominic the area of the persecution comprised nearly the whole of Christendom, and that its triumph was in some districts so complete as to destroy every memorial of the contest, the most callous nature must recoil with horror from the spectacle. For these atrocities were not perpetrated in the brief paroxysms of a reign of terror, or by the hands of obscure sectaries, but were inflicted by a triumphant Church, with every circumstance of solemnity and deliberation. Nor did the victims perish by a rapid and painless death, but by one which was carefully

Prescott has detected two or three instances of exaggeration in the calculations on which they are based. (*Ferdinand and Isabella*, vol. iii. pp. 492, 493.) It appears from Mariana (*De Rebus Hispaniæ*, xxiv. 17) that 2,000 persons were burnt by the Spanish Inquisition under Torquemada alone. An old historian, named Bernaldez, says that 700 were burnt at Seville between 1482–1489; and an inscription placed over the door of the Inquisition of Seville in 1527, declares that nearly 1,000 persons had been burnt since the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. (Llorente, tom. i. pp. 273–275.)

[1] Sarpi, *Hist. of Council of Trent*. Grotius says 100,000.

[2] 'Upon the 16th of February, 1568, a sentence of the Holy Office condemned *all the inhabitants* of the Netherlands *to death* as heretics. From this universal doom only a few persons especially named were excepted. A proclamation of the king, dated ten days later, confirmed this decree of the Inquisition and ordered it to be carried into instant execution. . . . Three millions of people, men, women, and children, were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines.' (Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, vol. ii. p. 155.)

selected as among the most poignant that man can suffer. They were usually burnt alive. They were burnt alive not unfrequently by a slow fire.[1] They were burnt alive after their constancy had been tried by the most excruciating agonies that minds fertile in torture could devise.[2] This was the physical torment

[1] One of the advantages of this being that the victim had more time for repentance. The following edifying anecdote is from Eymericus: 'In Cathalonia, in civitate Barchinon, fuerunt tres hæretici, ut impenitentes sed non relapsi, traditi brachio sæculari; et cum unus eorum qui erat sacerdos fuisset igni expositus, et ex uno latere jam aliqualiter adustus, clamavit quod educeretur, quia volebat abjurare, et pœnitebat. Et sic factum est: verum si bene vel male, nescio.' (*Directorium Inquisitorum*, p. 335.) Castellio notices in his time the bitter complaints of some zealous theologians 'si quem videant strangulari, ac non vivum lentâ flammâ torreri.' (Cluten, *De Hæreticis persequendis* [1610]: Preface of Martin Bellius.) See for a very horrible instance (produced, however, by aggravated circumstances), Sessa, *De Judæis* (Turin, 1717), p. 96. I may mention here that Eymericus was an Inquisitor in Arragon about 1368. His *Directorium* was printed at Barcelona as early as 1503; it passed through a great many editions, and with the *Commentaries* of Pegna was long the standing guide of the Inquisition. The admiring biographer of Eymericus sums up his claims upon posterity in one happy sentence: 'Hæc magna est et postrema viri laus, eum acri odio hæreticos omnes habuisse.' Independently of its value as throwing light upon the Inquisition in its earlier stages, this book is remarkable as giving a singularly clear view of the heresies of the time. I have not met anywhere else with so satisfactory a review of the opinions of Averroes. In addition to the brief sketch prefixed to the *Directorium*, there is a full history of the life of Eymericus (which was rather remarkable) in Touron, *Hist. des Hommes illustres de l'ordre de Saint. Dominique.*

[2] The tortures of the Inquisition I have noticed in the last chapter; but I may add that this mode of examination was expressly enjoined by Pope Innocent IV. in a bull beginning 'Teneatur præterea potestas seu rector omnes hæreticos quos captos habuerit cogere citra membri diminutionem et mortis periculum tanquam vere latrones et homicidas animarum, et fures Sacramentorum Dei et fidei Christianæ, errores suos expresse fateri et accusare alios hæreticos.' Clement IV. issued a bull nearly in the same terms

inflicted on those who dared to exercise their reason in the pursuit of truth; but what language can describe, and what imagination can conceive, the mental suffering that accompanied it? For in those days the family was divided against itself. The ray of conviction often fell upon a single member, leaving all others untouched. The victims who died for heresy were not, like those who died for witchcraft, solitary and doting women, but were usually men in the midst of active life, and often in the first flush of youthful enthusiasm, and those who loved them best were firmly convinced that their agonies upon earth were but the prelude of eternal agonies hereafter.[1] This was especially the case with weak women, who feel most acutely the sufferings of others, and around whose minds the clergy had most successfully wound

(Eymericus, Appendix, p. 9). It was decided by the Inquisitors that even a heretic who confessed his guilt might be tortured to discover his accomplices (Carena, *De Inquisitione* [Lugduni, 1649], pp. 69–73). The rule was that the tortures were not to be *repeated*, but it was decided that they might be *continued* through three days: 'Si quæstionatus decenter noluerit fateri veritatem . . . poterit ad terrorem, vel etiam ad veritatem, secunda, dies vel tertia assignari ad continuandum tormenta, non ad iterandum, quia iterari non debent, nisi novis supervenientibus indiciis contra eum, quia tunc possunt; sed continuari non prohibentur.' (Eymericus, p. 314.) Paramo, a Sicilian Inquisitor, assures us that the Inquisition was, like the good Samaritan, pouring into its wounded country the wine of a wholesome severity mingled with the oil of mercy. He was also of opinion that it resembled the Jewish tabernacle, in which the rod of Aaron and the manna (of mercy) lay side by side. (*De Origin. Inq.* p. 153.)

[1] The following is part of the sentence pronounced upon the relapsed heretic: 'Tu in reprobum sensum datus, maligno spiritu ductus pariter et seductus, præeligisti torqueri diris et perpetuis cruciatibus in infernum, et hic temporalibus ignibus corporaliter consumari, quam adhærendo consilio saniori ab erroribus damnabilibus ac pestiferis resilire.' (Eymericus, p. 337.)

their toils. It is horrible, it is appalling to reflect what the mother, the wife, the sister, the daughter of the heretic must have suffered from this teaching. She saw the body of him who was dearer to her than life, dislocated and writhing and quivering with pain; she watched the slow fire creeping from limb to limb till it had swathed him in a sheet of agony, and when at last the scream of anguish had died away, and the tortured body was at rest, she was told that all this was acceptable to the God she served, and was but a faint image of the sufferings He would inflict through eternity upon the dead. Nothing was wanting to give emphasis to the doctrine. It rang from every pulpit. It was painted over every altar. The Spanish heretic was led to the flames in a dress covered with representations of devils and of frightful tortures to remind the spectators to the very last of the doom that awaited him.

All this is very horrible, but it is only a small part of the misery which the persecuting spirit of Rome has produced. For, judging by the ordinary measure of human courage, for every man who dared to avow his principles at the stake, there must have been many who believed that by such an avowal alone they could save their souls, but who were nevertheless scared either by the prospect of their own sufferings, or of the destitution of their children,[1] who passed

[1] It was the invariable rule to confiscate the entire property of the impenitent heretic, a rule which Paramo justifies on the ground that the crime of the heretic is so great that something of his impurity falls upon all related to him, and that the Almighty (whom he blasphemously terms the First Inquisitor) deprived both Adam and his descendants of the Garden of Eden. The children of the heretic were thus left absolutely destitute, and with a stigma upon them that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was sufficient to shut them out

their lives in one long series of hypocritical observances, and studied falsehoods, and at last, with minds degraded by habitual deception, sank hopeless and terrorstricken into the grave.[1] And besides all these things, we have to remember that the spirit which

from all sympathy, from all charity, and from all hope. The thought that those who were most dear to him would probably be abandoned either to starvation or to the life of the prostitute was doubtless one of the most acute pangs of the martyr, and the hope of preventing such a catastrophe one of the most powerful inducements to recant. In this rule we have also an explanation of those trials of dead men for heresy which the Catholic clergy so frequently instituted. Protestants sometimes regard these simply as displays of impotent malice. Nothing, however, can be more false. They had the very intelligible object of robbing the children of the dead. 'Juste enim proceditur contra defunctos hæreticos. Primo, ut memoria ejus damnatur. Secundo, ut bona illius per fiscum ab hæredibus defuncti seu a quibuslibet aliis possessoribus auferantur.' (Paramo, *De Orig. et Progressu Sancti Inquisitionis* [Madrid, 1598], p. 588.) The confiscation of the goods of the heretic was authorised by a bull of Innocent III. (on the ground that children are in the Divine judgments often punished for the offences of their fathers), and again by Alexander IV. (Eymericus, pp. 58, 59, 64.) The following passage from an old ecclesiastical lawyer gives a vivid picture of the ferocity displayed towards the children of heretics: Ipsi filii hæreticorum adeo sunt effecti a jure incapaces et inhabiles ad succedendum patri, quod illi etiam in uno nummo succedere non possunt: immo semper debent in miseria et egestate sordescere sicut filii reorum criminis læsæ majestatis humanæ, adeo quod nihil aliud eis sit relinquendum, nisi sola vita quæ ex misericordia largitur, et tales esse debent in hoc mundo ut eis vita sit supplicium et mors solatium.' (Farinacius, *De Delictis et Pœnis*, p. 205: Venice, 1619.) However, it was provided that children who betrayed their parents preserved their inheritance. On the laws resulting from these notions, see Prescott, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, vol. i. pp. 262, 263.

[1] Before operating in any district, the Inquisitors always made a proclamation offering pardon under certain conditions to those who confessed and retracted their heresies within thirty or forty days. Mariana says that when this proclamation was made, on the first establishment of the Inquisition in Andalusia, 17,000 recantations followed. (*De Rebus Hispaniæ*, lib. xxiv. c. 17.)

was manifested in acts of detailed persecution had often swept over a far wider sphere, and produced sufferings not perhaps so excruciating, but far more extensive. We have to recollect those frightful massacres, perhaps the most fearful the world has ever seen: the massacre of the Albigenses which a pope had instigated, or the massacre of St. Bartholomew for which a pope returned solemn thanks to Heaven. We have to recollect those religious wars which reproduced themselves century after century with scarcely diminished fury, which turned Syria into an Aceldama, which inundated with blood the fairest lands of Europe, which blasted the prosperity and paralysed the intellect of many a noble nation, and which planted animosities in Europe that two hundred years have been unable altogether to destroy. Nor should we forget the hardening effects that must have been produced on the minds of the spectators who at every royal marriage in Spain were regaled by the public execution of heretics, or who were summoned to the great square of Toulouse to contemplate the struggles of four hundred witches in the flames. When we add together all these various forms of suffering, and estimate all their aggravations, when we think that the victims of these persecutions were usually men who were not only entirely guiltless, but who proved themselves by their very deaths to be endowed with most transcendent and heroic virtues, and when we still further consider that all this was but part of one vast conspiracy to check the developement of the human mind, and to destroy that spirit of impartial and unrestricted enquiry which is the very first condition of progress as of truth; when we consider all these

things, it can surely be no exaggeration to say that the Church of Rome has inflicted a greater amount of unmerited suffering than any other religion that has ever existed among mankind. To complete the picture, it is only necessary to add that these things were done in the name of the Teacher who said: 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another.'

But while the preeminent atrocity of the persecutions of the Church of Rome is fully admitted, nothing can be more grossly disingenuous or untrue than to represent persecution as her peculiar taint. She persecuted to the full extent of the power of her clergy, and that power was very great. The persecution of which every Protestant Church was guilty was measured by the same rule, but clerical influence in Protestant countries was comparatively weak. The Protestant persecutions were never so sanguinary as those of the Catholics, but the principle was affirmed quite as strongly, was acted on quite as constantly, and was defended quite as pertinaciously by the clergy. In Germany, at the time of the protestation of Spires, when the name of Protestant was assumed, the Lutheran princes absolutely prohibited the celebration of mass within their dominions. In England a similar measure was passed as early as Edward VI.[1] On the accession of Elizabeth, and before the Catholics had given any signs of discontent, a law was made prohibiting any religious service other than the Prayer Book; the penalty for the third offence being imprisonment for life; while another law imposed a fine on anyone who abstained from the Anglican

[1] Hallam, *Const. Hist.*

service. The Presbyterians through a long succession of reigns were imprisoned, branded, mutilated, scourged, and exposed in the pillory. Many Catholics under false pretences were tortured and hung. Anabaptists and Arians were burnt alive.[1] In Ireland,

[1] Hallam, *Const.-Hist.* And then in 1562 it was enacted, that all who had ever graduated at the universities or received holy orders, all lawyers, all magistrates, must take the oath of supremacy when tendered to them, under pain of forfeiture or imprisonment during the royal pleasure; and if after three months they refused to take the oath when again tendered to them, they were guilty of high treason and condemned to death. Now the discontent of the Catholics might be a very good reason for making them take the oath of allegiance, which is simply a test of loyalty. It might even be a reason for making the oath of supremacy obligatory on those who for the future aspired to offices of importance —in other words, for excluding the Catholics from such offices; but to pass a retrospective law which made almost every educated Roman Catholic, if he refused to take an oath which was absolutely and confessedly irreconcilable with the doctrines of his Church, liable to be punished with death, was as sweeping a measure of persecution as any that history records. And this was done many years before the bull which deposed Elizabeth. The misconceptions which ignorance, and worse than ignorance, accumulated around this subject have been so completely dispelled by Hallam and Macaulay that I will only add one remark. The principal apology which was published for the policy of Elizabeth towards the Catholics, was Bishop Bilson's *Christian Subjection*, in 1585. In that work the coercive laws were openly justified on the ground of the absolute sinfulness of toleration (pp. 16–29). Nor was it merely the public profession of error which was rightly prohibited. This distinction the Bishop indignantly repudiates. 'No corner is so secret,' he says, addressing the Catholics, 'no prison so close, but your impiety there suffered doth offend God, infect others, and confirm your own frowardness. If your religion be good, why should it lack churches? If it be naught, why should it have chambers? A Christian prince may not pardon or wink at your falsehood' (p. 26). See also on the duty of intolerance, pp. 16–29. Milner, in his *Letters to a Prebendary*, has collected much evidence on the subject. There is much truth as well as bitter eloquence in the taunt of an old persecuted Puritan, when he denounced Anglicanism as 'the Church that is planted in the blood of her mother.'

the religion of the immense majority of the people was banned and proscribed, and when in 1626 the Government manifested some slight wish to grant it partial relief, nearly all the Irish Protestant bishops, under the presidency of Usher, assembled to protest in a solemn resolution against the indulgence. 'The religion of Papists,' they said, 'is superstitious, their faith and doctrine erroneous and heretical; their Church in respect of both apostatical. To give them therefore a toleration, or to consent that they may freely exercise their religion, and profess their faith and doctrine, is a grievous sin.'[1] In Scotland, during nearly the whole period that the Stuarts were on the throne of England, a persecution rivalling in atrocity almost any on record was directed by the English Government, at the instigation of the Scotch bishops, and with the approbation of the English Church, against all who repudiated episcopacy. If a conventicle was held in a house, the preacher was liable to be put to death. If it was held in the open air, both minister and people incurred the same fate. The Presbyterians were hunted like criminals over the mountains. Their ears were torn from the roots. They were branded with hot irons. Their fingers were wrenched asunder by the thumbkins. The bones of their legs were shattered in the boots. Women were scourged publicly through the streets. Multitudes were transported to Barbadoes, infuriated soldiers were let loose upon them, and encouraged to exercise all their ingenuity in torturing them.[2] Nor was it only the British Go-

[1] Elrington, *Life of Usher*, vol. i. p. 73.

[2] For the circumstances of the persecution in Scotland, see Wodrow's *History*; and for a summary of the laws against Nonconformists in England, Neal's *History of the Puritans*, vol. ii. pp. 695–696.

vernment, or the zealous advocates of episcopacy, who manifested this spirit. When the Reformation triumphed in Scotland, one of its first fruits was a law prohibiting any priest from celebrating, or any worshipper from hearing mass, under pain of the confiscation of his goods for the first offence, of exile for the second, and of death for the third.[1] That the Queen of Scotland should be permitted to hear mass in her own private chapel, was publicly denounced as an intolerable evil. 'One mass,' exclaimed Knox, 'is more fearful to me than if 10,000 armed enemies were landed in any part of the realm.'[2] In France, when the government of certain towns was conceded to the Protestants, they immediately employed their power to suppress absolutely the Catholic worship, to prohibit any Protestant from attending a marriage or a funeral that was celebrated by a priest, to put down all mixed marriages, and to persecute to the full extent of their power those who had abandoned their creed.[3] In Sweden, all who dissented from any article of the Confession of Augsburg were at once banished.[4] In Protestant Switzerland numerous Anabaptists perished by drowning; the free-thinker Gentilis by the axe; Servetus, and a convert to Judaism, by the flames.[5] In America, the colonists who were driven from their own land by persecution, not only proscribed the Catholics, but also persecuted the Quakers—the most inoffensive of all sects—with

[1] Buckle, *Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 231; McKenzie, *Laws of Scotland.*

[2] McCrie, *Life of Knox* (ed. 1840), p. 246.

[3] Much evidence of this is collected in Buckle, vol. i. pp. 509–523.

[4] Macaulay, *Essays*, vol. ii. p. 140; Laing, *Sweden.*

[5] The religious policy of the Swiss Protestants has lately been well treated by M. Barni in his very interesting work *Les Martyrs de la libre pensée.*

atrocious severity.[1] If Holland was somewhat more tolerant, it was early remarked, that while the liberty allowed there was unusually great, the power accorded to the clergy was unusually small.[2] As late as 1690 a synod was held at Amsterdam, consisting partly of Dutch, and partly of French and English ministers who were driven to Holland by persecution, and in that synod the doctrine that the magistrate has no right to crush heresy and idolatry by the civil power, was unanimously pronounced to be 'false, scandalous, and pernicious.'[3] When Descartes went to Holland, the reformed clergy directed against him all the force of their animosity, and the accusation by which they endeavoured to stir up the civil power against the author of the most sublime of all modern proofs of the existence of the Deity, was atheism.[4] The right of the civil magistrate to punish heresy was maintained by the Helvetic, Scottish, Belgic, and Saxon Confessions.[5] Luther, in reply to Philip of Hesse, distinctly asserted it;[6] Calvin, Beza, and Jurieu, all wrote books on the lawfulness of persecution. Knox,

[1] See Bancroft's *History of America.*

[2] Temple, *On the United Provinces.*

[3] Bayle, art. *Augustine*, note H. See, too, on the general intolerance of the Dutch clergy, Hallam, *Hist. of Lit.*, vol. iii. p. 289.

[4] *Biog. univ.*, art. *Descartes*; Voltaire (*Lettres philosophiques*, xiv.). Considering the writings of Descartes, this is perhaps the most preposterous accusation ever brought against a philosopher, if we except one of which Linnæus was the victim. Some good people in Sweden desired, it is said, to have his system of botany suppressed, because it was based upon the discovery of the sexes of the plants, and was therefore calculated to inflame the minds of youth. (Gioja, *Filosofia della Statistica*, tom. ii. p. 389.)

[5] Palmer, *On the Church*, vol. i. p. 380.

[6] And also in reply to the Wittenberg theologians. At an earlier period, when his translation of the New Testament was proscribed, he had advocated toleration. For a full view of his sentiments, see Henry's *Life of Calvin*, vol. ii. pp. 232–242.

appealing to the Old Testament, declared that those who were guilty of idolatry might justly be put to death.[1] Cranmer and Ridley, as well as four other bishops, formed the commission in the reign of Edward VI. for trying and condemning Anabaptists. The only two exceptions to this spirit among the leaders of the Reformation, seem to have been Zuinglius and Socinus. The first was always averse to

[1] McCrie's *Life of Knox*, p. 246. It is in his *Appellation* that this great apostle of murder most fully expounded his views: 'None provoking the people to idolatrie ought to be exempted from the punishment of death. . . . The whole tribes did in verie dede execute that sharp judgment against the tribe of Benjamin for a lesse offense than for idolatrie. And the same ought to be done wheresoever Christ Jesus and his Evangill is so receaved in any realme province or citie that the magistrates and people have solemnly avowed and promised to defend the same, as under King Edward of late days was done in England. In such places, I say, it is not only lawful to punish to the death such as labour to subvert the true religion, but the magistrates and people are bound to do so onless they wil provoke the wrath of God against themselves. . . . . And therefore, my Lordes, to return to you, seing that God hath armed your handes with the sworde of justice, seeing that His law most streatly commandeth idolaters and fals prophetes to be punished with death, and that you be placed above your subjects to reigne as fathers over their children, and further seing that not only I, but with me manie thousand famous, godlie, and learned persons, accuse your Byshoppes and the whole rabble of the Papistical clergie of idolatrie, of murther, and of blasphemie against God committed: it appertaineth to your Honours to be vigilant and carefull in so weightie a matter. The question is not of earthly substance, but of the glorie of God, and of the salvation of yourselves.' (Knox's *Works*, Laing's edition, vol. iv. pp. 500–515.) In 1572 the two houses of Convocation implored Elizabeth to put Mary Queen of Scots to death, alleging among other reasons that she had endeavoured to seduce God's people to idolatry, and that according to the Old Testament all who did so should be put to death. (Froude's *Hist. of England*, vol. x. pp. 360–362.)

persecution.[1] The second was so distinctively the apostle of toleration, that this was long regarded as one of the peculiar doctrines of his sect.[2] With these exceptions, all the most eminent Reformers advocated persecution, and in nearly every country where their boasted Reformation triumphed, the result is to be mainly attributed to coercion.[3] When Calvin burnt Servetus for his opinions on the Trinity, this, which,

[1] This is noticed by Hallam and other writers.

[2] Thus, for example, Jurieu, the great antagonist of Bossuet, the most eminent French minister in Holland (he was pastor of Rotterdam), and certainly one of the most distinguished Protestants of his day, calls universal toleration, 'Ce dogme socinien, le plus dangereux de tous ceux de la secte socinienne, puisqu'il va à ruiner le christianisme et à établir l'indifférence des religions.' (*Droits des deux Souverains en matière de Religion, la Conscience et l'Expérience* [Rotterdam, 1687], p. 14.) This work (which was published anonymously) was written in reply to the *Contrains-les d'entrer* of Bayle, with the rather unnecessary object of showing that the French Protestants repudiated the tolerant maxims of that great writer.

[3] I commend the following passage to the special attention of my readers: 'Peut-on nier que le paganisme est tombé dans le monde par l'autorité des empereurs romains? On peut assurer sans témérité que le paganisme seroit encore debout, et que les trois quarts de l'Europe seroient encore payens si Constantin et ses successeurs n'avoient employé leur autorité pour l'abolir. Mais, je vous prie, de quelles voies Dieu s'est-il servi dans ces derniers siècles pour rétablir la véritable religion dans l'Occident? Les rois de Suède, ceux de Danemarck, ceux d'Angleterre, les magistrats souverains de Suisse, des Païs-Bas, des villes libres d'Allemagne, les princes électeurs, et autres princes souverains de l'empire, n'ont-ils pas employé leur autorité pour abattre le Papisme? . . . En vérité il faut être bien téméraire pour condamner des voies dont la Providence s'est constamment servi pour établir la véritable religion; excepté le premier établissement du christianisme, et sa conservation, dans laquelle Dieu a voulu qu'il y eût un miracle sensible; c'est pourquoi il n'a pas voulu que l'autorité s'en mêlât; excepté, dis-je, cet endroit de l'histoire de l'Église, on voit constamment partout que Dieu fait entrer l'autorité pour établir la véritable religion et pour ruiner les fausses.' (*Droit des deux Souverains*, pp. 280–282.)

in the words of a great modern historian, 'had perhaps as many circumstances of aggravation as any execution for heresy that ever took place,'[1] was almost unanimously applauded by all sections of Protestants.[2] Melanchthon, Bullinger, and Farel, wrote to express their warm approbation of the crime. Beza defended it in an elaborate treatise. Only one man of eminence ventured openly to oppose it, and that man, who may be regarded as the first avowed champion of complete religious liberty, was also one of the most eminent of the precursors of rationalism. He wrote under the name of Martin Bellius, but his real name was Chatillon, or, as it was generally latinised, Castellio.[3]

Castellio was a Frenchman, a scholar of remarkable acquirements, and a critic of still more remarkable boldness. He had been at one time a friend of Calvin, and had filled a professorship at Geneva, but the daring spirit which he carried into every sphere soon scandalised the leaders of the Reformation.

[1] Hallam, *Hist. of Literature*, vol. i. p. 554.

[2] See the collection of approbations quoted by Beza, *De Hæreticis*; McKenzie, *Life of Calvin*, pp. 79–89; and the remarks in Coleridge, *Notes on English Divines*, vol. i. p. 49.

[3] His name was originally Chatillon or Chateillon, which, after the fashion of the age, he latinised into Castellio; but, at the beginning of his career, some one having called him by mistake Castalio, he was so charmed by the name, which, by reminding him of the Castalian fount, seemed a good augury for his literary career, that he adopted it. See, for a full account of his life, Bayle, art. *Castalio*, and Henry, *Life of Calvin*; and, for a short notice, Hallam, *Hist. of Literature*, vol. i. p. 557. Besides the works I have noticed in the text, Castalio translated the dialogues of the famous Socinian Ochino, and an anonymous German work of the mystical school of Tauler, edited the Sibylline verses (his preface is given to the recent edition by Alexander [Paris, 1846]), wrote a defence of his translation of the Bible (which translation seems to have been an indifferent performance), and published some minor essays or dialogues.

Having devoted himself early to Biblical criticism, he had translated the Bible into Latin, and in the course of his labours he came to the conclusion that the Song of Solomon was simply a Jewish love song, and that the allegory that was supposed to underlie it was purely imaginary.[1] A still graver offence in the eyes of the Geneva theologians was his emphatic repudiation of the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. He assailed it not so much by any train of arguments, or by an appeal to authority, as on the broad grounds of its repugnance to our sense of right, and he developed its moral atrocity in a manner that elicited from Beza a torrent of almost frantic invective. Driven from Geneva, he at last obtained a professorship at Basle, where he denounced the murder of Servetus, and preached for the first time in Christendom the duty of absolute toleration, based upon the rationalistic doctrine of the innocence of error. The object of doctrines, he said, is to make men better, and those which do not contribute to this end are absolutely unimportant. The history of dogmas should be looked upon as a series of developements, contributing to the moral perfection of mankind. First of all, polytheism was supreme. Christ came and effected the ascendency of monotheism, in

[1] From which he somewhat rashly concluded that it ought not to be retained in the Bible. 'For my part,' said Niebuhr, when a young German pastor expressed his scruples about reading what he believed to be simply a love song, 'I should deem the Bible itself imperfect if it did not include an expression of the deepest and strongest passion of humanity.' The history of the interpretations of the Song of Solomon would be long and curious — from the Jewish Cabalists, who, regarding heaven as the union of man with the Deity by love, and death as the 'kiss of God,' esteemed the Song of Solomon the highest expression of this transcendental union — to the somewhat fantastic criticisms of M. Renan.

which Jews, Turks, and Christians all agree. Christianity again introduced a specific type of character, of which universal charity and beneficence were the leading features. Questions concerning the Trinity, or predestination, or the sacraments, are involved in great and perhaps impenetrable obscurity, and have no moral influence, and ought in consequence not to be insisted upon. 'To discuss the difference between the Law and the Gospel, gratuitous remission of sins or imputed righteousness, is as if a man were to discuss whether a prince was to come on horseback, or in a chariot, or dressed in white or in red.'[1] To persecute for such questions is absurd, and not only absurd but atrocious. For if the end of Christianity be the diffusion of a spirit of beneficence, persecution must be its extreme antithesis, and if persecution be an essential element of a religion, that religion must be a curse to mankind.[2]

Such new and startling sentiments as these, coming from a writer of considerable eminence, attracted much attention, and aroused great indignation. Both Calvin and Beza replied in a strain of the fiercest

[1] On which Beza comments: 'Hac impietate quid tandem magis impium aut diabolicum ipsæ unquam inferiorum portæ exhalarunt.' (*De Hæreticis a Civili Magistratu puniendis: Libellus adversus Martini Bellii farraginem et Novorum Academicorum sectam* [1554], p. 58.)

[2] Quis non putet Christum aliquem esse Molochum aut ejus generis aliquem Deum si sibi vivos homines immolari, comburique velit? Quis velit servire Christo eâ conditione, ut si in aliquâ re inter tot controversias ab iis dissideat, qui habent in alios potestatem, vivus comburatur ipsius Christi jussu crudelius quam in tauro Phalaridis, etiamsi in mediis flammis Christum magnâ voce concelebret, et se in eum pleno ore credere vociferetur?' (Preface of Martin Bellius in Joachim Cluten's *De Hæreticis persequendis*, ed. 1610.) This work consists of a collection of passages from different authors (two of them by Castellio) in favour of toleration.

invective. Calvin especially, from the time when Castellio left Geneva, pursued him with untiring hatred, laboured hard to procure his expulsion from Basle, denounced him in the preface to an edition of the New Testament[1] as 'one who had been chosen by Satan to deceive the thoughtless and indifferent,' and attempted to blast his character by the grossest calumnies. In the friendship of Socinus, Castellio found some compensation for the general hatred of which he was the object, and he appears to have inclined greatly to the doctrines of his friend. Separated alike from the Protestants and the Catholics, his prospects in life were blighted, he sank into a condition of absolute destitution, and is said to have been almost reduced to literal starvation, when death relieved him of his sufferings. A few kindly sentences of Montaigne,[2] who pronounced his closing scene to have been a disgrace to mankind, have in some degree rescued this first apostle of toleration from oblivion.

[1] See Bayle and Henry. Castellio, when publishing *his* edition of the Bible, made the preface the vehicle of a warm appeal for toleration (which is given in Cluten). Calvin, among other things, accused him of stealing wood for his fire—an accusation which was solemnly refuted. Bayle has collected much evidence to show that Castellio was a man of spotless character, singularly loved by those about him, intensely amiable, keenly sensible of the attacks of which he was the object. Castellio has himself made a collection of the epithets Calvin in one short work heaped upon him: 'Vocas me subinde in Gallico libello: blasphemum, calumniatorem, malignum, canem latrantem, plenum ignorantiæ et bestialitatis, sacrarum literarum impurum corruptorem, Dei prorsus derisorem, omnis religionis contemptorem, impudentem, impurum canem, impium, obscœnum, torti perversique ingenii, vagum, balatronem, nebulonem vero appellas octies; et hæc omnia longo copiosius quam a me recensentur facis in libello duorum foliorum et quidem perparvorum.'

[2] *Essais*, liv. i. ch. 34.

Some years after the murder of Servetus, Beza, in relating its circumstances, declared that Castellio and Socinus were the only men who had opposed it;[1] and although this statement is not strictly true,[2] it but very little exaggerates the unanimity that was displayed. When we recollect the great notoriety of this execution, and also its aggravated character, so general an approbation seems to show clearly not

[1] Beza, *Vita Calvini.*

[2] It is sufficiently refuted by Beza himself in his answer to Castellio, when he speaks of those who objected to the burning of Servetus (he calls them 'emissaries of Satan'), as amounting to a sect. He also specifies two or three writers, of whom the principal seems to have been Clebergius. I have never been able to meet with the work of this author, but Beza represents him as objecting absolutely to all forms of persecution, and basing this objection on the absolute innocence of honest error; which doctrine again he rested on the impossibility of ascertaining certainly religious truths, as demonstrated by the continuance of controversy. The following passages quoted by Beza are extremely remarkable for the age: 'De controversiis nondum certo constat; si enim constaret disputari defuisset.' 'Nonne Deus eos amabit qui id quod verum esse putant defenderint bonâ fide? Etiam si forte erraverint, nonne eis veniam dabit?' (Beza, pp. 65, 93.) Hallam has also exhumed three or four books or pamphlets that were written at the same time in favour of toleration. Acontius (Acanacio) seems to have been one of the most distinguished of these authors. Hallam says (*Hist. of Literature*) his book is, 'perhaps, the first wherein the limitation of fundamental articles of Christianity to a small number is laid down at considerable length. He instances among doctrines which he does not reckon fundamental, those of the Real Presence and of the Trinity.' Acontius was born at Trent. He adopted sceptical or indifferent opinions, verging on Socinianism; he took refuge in England, and received a pension from Elizabeth. There is a full notice of him in an anonymous French history of Socinianism of very great research (1723), ascribed to Guichard or to Lamy (pp. 261–264). The hand of Socinus was suspected in some of these works. That of Bellius was by some ascribed to him. So, too, was a work now attributed to an author named Minos Celso, concerning whom scarcely anything is known, except that, like Socinus, he was born at Sienna. (See *Biog. univ.*, arts. *Servetus* and *Celso.*)

only that the spirit of early Protestantism was as undoubtedly intolerant as the spirit of Catholicism, which is an unquestionable fact, but also that it flinched as little from the extreme consequences to which intolerance leads. It seems to show that the comparative mildness of Protestant persecutions results much more from the circumstances under which they took place, than from any sense of the atrocity of burning the heretic. And, indeed, while the Romish persecutions were undoubtedly unrivalled in magnitude, it must be admitted that there are some aspects under which they contrast not unfavourably with the Protestant ones. Catholicism was an ancient Church. She had gained a great part of her influence by vast services to mankind. She rested avowedly upon the principle of authority. She was defending herself against aggression and innovation. That a Church so circumstanced should endeavour to stifle in blood every aspiration towards a purer system, was indeed a fearful crime, but it was a crime which was not altogether unnatural. She might point to the priceless blessings she had bestowed upon humanity, to the slavery she had destroyed, to the civilisation she had founded, to the many generations she had led with honour to the grave. She might show how completely her doctrines were interwoven with the whole social system, how fearful would be the convulsion if they were destroyed, and how absolutely incompatible they were with the acknowledgment of private judgment. These considerations would not make her blameless, but they would at least palliate her guilt. But what shall we say of a Church that was but a thing of yesterday, a Church that had as yet no services to show, no

claims upon the gratitude of mankind, a Church that was by profession the creature of private judgment, and was in reality generated by the intrigues of a corrupt court, which, nevertheless, suppressed by force a worship that multitudes deemed necessary to their salvation, and by all her organs, and with all her energies, persecuted those who clung to the religion of their fathers? What shall we say of a religion which comprised at most but a fourth part of the Christian world, and which the first explosion of private judgment had shivered into countless sects, which was, nevertheless, so pervaded by the spirit of dogmatism that each of these sects asserted its distinctive doctrines with the same confidence, and persecuted with the same unhesitating virulence, as a Church that was venerable with the homage of more than twelve centuries? What shall we say of men who, in the name of religious liberty, deluged their land with blood, trampled on the very first principles of patriotism, calling in strangers to their assistance, and openly rejoicing in the disasters of their country, and who, when they at last attained their object, immediately established a religious tyranny as absolute as that which they had subverted? These were the attitudes which for more than a century Protestantism uniformly presented, and so strong and so general was its intolerance that for some time it may, I believe, be truly said that there were more instances of partial toleration being advocated by Roman Catholics than by orthodox Protestants. Although nothing can be more egregiously absurd than to represent the Inquisition as something unconnected with the Church, although it was created by a pope, and introduced into the chief countries of Europe by

the sovereigns who were most devoted to the Church, and composed of ecclesiastics, and directed to the punishment of ecclesiastical offences, and developed in each country according to the intensity of Catholic feeling, and long regarded as the chief bulwark of Catholicity—although all the atrocities it perpetrated do undoubtedly fall upon the blood-stained Church that created it—it is nevertheless true that one or two popes endeavoured to moderate its severities, and reproved the excesses of Torquemada in language that is not without something of evangelical mildness. Erasmus, too, at all times endeavoured to assuage the persecution, and Erasmus lived and died in communion with the Church. Sir Thomas More, though he was himself a persecutor, at least admitted the abstract excellence of toleration, and extolled it in his *Utopia*. Hôpital, and Lord Baltimore the Catholic founder of Maryland, were the first two legislators who uniformly upheld religious liberty when in power, and Maryland continued the solitary refuge for the oppressed of every Christian sect, till the Protestant party who were in the ascendant in its legislature basely enacted the whole penal code against the coreligionists of the founder of the colony. But among the Protestants it may, I believe, be safely affirmed, that there was no example of the consistent advocacy or practice of toleration in the sixteenth century that was not virulently and generally denounced by all sections of the clergy,[1]

[1] If this language should appear startling to any reader, I commend to his attention the following passage from an historian who was accustomed to weigh well his expressions: 'At the end of the sixteenth century the simple proposition that men for holding or declaring heterodox opinions in religion should not be burned alive or otherwise put to death, was

and scarcely any till the middle of the seventeenth century. Indeed, even at the close of the seventeenth century, Bossuet was able to maintain that the right of the civil magistrate to punish religious error was one of the points on which both churches agreed; and he added that he only knew two bodies of Christians who denied it. They were the Socinians and the Anabaptists.[1]

It is often said that Protestantism in its earlier days persecuted, because it had inherited something

itself little else than a sort of heterodoxy; and though many privately must have been persuaded of its truth, the Protestant churches were as far from acknowledging it as that of Rome. No one had yet pretended to assert the general right of religious worship, which, in fact, was rarely or never conceded to the Romanists in a Protestant country, though the Huguenots shed oceans of blood to secure the same privilege for themselves.' (Hallam, *Hist. of Literature*, vol. i. p. 559.) The same judicious historian elsewhere says: 'Persecution is the deadly original sin of the Reformed churches, that which cools every honest man's zeal for their cause in proportion as his reading becomes more extensive.' (*Const. Hist.* vol. i. ch. 2.)

[1] 'La discipline de nos Réformés permet aussi le recours au bras séculier en certains cas, et on trouve parmi les articles de la discipline de l'Église de Genève que les ministres doivent déférer au magistrat les incorrigibles qui méprisent les peines spirituelles, et en particulier ceux qui enseignent de nouveaux dogmes sans distinction. Et encore aujourd'hui celui de tous les auteurs Calvinistes qui reproche le plus aigrement à l'Église romaine la cruauté de sa doctrine, en demeure d'accord dans le fond, puisqu'il permet l'exercice de la puissance du glaive dans les matières de la religion et de la conscience (Jurieu, *Syst.* ii. ch. 22–23, &c.); chose aussi qui ne peut être révoquée en doute sans énerver et comme estropier la puissance publique; de sorte qu'il n'y a point d'illusion plus dangereuse que de donner la souffrance pour un caractère de la vraie Église, et je ne connois parmi les Chrétiens que les Sociniens et les Anabaptistes qui s'opposent à cette doctrine.' (*Variations protestantes*, liv. x. ch. 56.) The Anabaptists, however, were not always so tolerant, and one of the earliest rallying cries of the insurgents of Munster was: 'Que tous non rebaptisez fussent mis à mort comme payens et meschans.' (Sleidan, liv. x.)

of the principles of Rome; but that persecution was entirely uncongenial with its character, and was therefore in course of time abandoned. In a certain sense, this is undoubtedly true. Protestantism received the doctrine of persecution from Rome just as it received the Athanasian Creed or any other portion of its dogmatic teaching. The doctrine of private judgment is inconsistent with persecution just as it is inconsistent with the doctrine of exclusive salvation, and with the universal practice of all sections of early Protestants in their dealings with error. If man is bound to form his opinions by his private judgment, if the exercise of private judgment is both a duty and a right, it is absurd to prescribe beforehand the conclusion to which he must arrive, to brand honest error as criminal, and to denounce the spirit of impartiality and of scepticism as offensive to the Deity. This is what almost all the Protestant leaders did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and what a very large proportion of them still do, and it was out of this conception of the guilt of error that persecution arose. Nothing can be more erroneous than to represent it as merely a weapon which was employed in a moment of conflict, or as the outburst of a natural indignation, or as the unreasoning observance of an old tradition. Persecution among the early Protestants was a distinct and definite doctrine, digested into elaborate treatises, indissolubly connected with a large portion of the received theology, developed by the most enlightened and far-seeing theologians, and enforced against the most inoffensive as against the most formidable sects. It was the doctrine of the palmiest days of Protestantism. It was taught by those who are justly esteemed the greatest of its

leaders. It was manifested most clearly in those classes which were most deeply imbued with its dogmatic teaching. The Episcopalians generally justified it by appealing to St. Augustine; and Calvin and the Scotch Puritans by appealing to the Old Testament; but in both cases the dominating and controlling cause was the belief in exclusive salvation and in the guilt of error, and in all countries the first dawning of tolerance represents the rise of that rationalistic spirit which regards doctrines simply as the vehicles of moral sentiments, and which, while it greatly diminishes their value, simplifies their character and lessens their number.

The evidence I have accumulated will be sufficient to show how little religious liberty is due to Protestantism considered as a dogmatic system. It might appear also to show that the influence of the Reformation upon its progress was but small. Such a conclusion would, however, be altogether erroneous, for although that influence was entirely indirect, it was not the less powerful. To the Reformation is chiefly due the appearance of that rationalistic spirit which at last destroyed persecution. By the events that followed the Reformation, the adherents of different religious creeds became so mingled, that it was the interest of a large proportion of the members of every Church to advocate toleration. At the Reformation, too, the doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy was assailed, and the ministers of the new churches, being drawn into more intimate communion with society, were placed in circumstances far more fitted to develope the kindly affections than the circumstances of the Catholic priests, while in England, at least, the accomplishments of a scholar and the re-

finement of a gentleman, blending with the pure and noble qualities of a religious teacher, have produced a class type which is scarcely sullied by fanaticism, and is probably, on the whole, the highest as it is the most winning that has ever been attained. Besides this, the Reformation produced a number of churches, which possessed such an amount of flexibility that they have been able to adapt themselves to the requirements of the age, while Catholicism continues to the present day the bitter enemy of toleration. The influence of the first three facts is, I think, sufficiently obvious. A short sketch of the history of toleration in France and England will clearly establish the fourth.

In order to understand the history of religious liberty, there are two distinct series of facts to be considered. There is a succession of intellectual changes which destroy the conceptions on which persecution rests, and a succession of political events which are in part the consequence of those changes, but which also react powerfully upon their cause. The intellectual basis of French toleration is to be found in that great sceptical movement which originated towards the close of the sixteenth century, and which at last triumphed in the Revolution. In no other country had that movement been so powerful, not only on account of the great ability with which it was conducted, but also from the curious fact that its first three leaders represented three entirely different casts of mind, and acted in consequence upon three different sections of society. The scepticism of Montaigne was that of a man of the world; the scepticism of Descartes was that of a philosopher; the scepticism of Bayle was that of a scholar. Mon-

taigne, looking with an impartial eye on the immense variety of opinions that were maintained with equal confidence by men of equal ability, and judging all subjects by a keen, worldly, and somewhat superficial common sense, arrived at the conclusion that it was hopeless seeking to ascertain what is true; that such a task transcended the limits of human powers; and that it was the part of a wise man to remain poised with an indifferent mind between opposing sects. As a consequence of this he taught for the first time, or almost for the first time, in France, the innocence of error and the evil of persecution. Descartes had a far greater confidence in human faculties, but he had also a far greater distrust of the ordinary judgments of experience. He taught men that the beginning of all wisdom is absolute, universal scepticism; that all the impressions of childhood, all the conclusions of the senses, all of what are deemed the axioms of life, must be discarded, and from the simple fact of consciousness the entire scheme of knowledge must be evolved. Like many of the greatest philosophers, Descartes did not pause to apply his principles to practical life, but their influence was not the less great. The scepticism which he made the beginning of wisdom, and the purely rational process by which that scepticism was at last dispelled, were alike inconsistent with a system which esteemed doubt a sin, and which enforced conviction by the brand.

The intellect of Bayle was very different from those of his predecessors, and was indeed in some respects almost unique. There have been many greater men, but there never perhaps was one who was so admirably fitted by his acquirements and his

abilities, and even by the very defects of his character, to be a perfect critic. With the most profound and varied knowledge he combined to an almost unrivalled extent that rare faculty of assuming the standing-point of the system he was discussing, and of developing its arguments as they would have been developed by its most skilful advocate. But while he possessed to the highest degree that knowledge and that philosophical perception which lay bare the hidden springs of past beliefs, he appeared to be almost absolutely destitute of the creative power, and almost absolutely indifferent to the results of controversy. He denied nothing. He inculcated nothing. He scarcely exhibited any serious preference. It was his delight to bring together the arguments of many discordant teachers, to dissect and analyse them with the most exquisite skill, and then to develope them till they mutually destroyed one another. His genius was never so conspicuous as when lighting up the wrecks of opposing systems, exhuming the shattered monuments of human genius to reveal their nothingness and their vanity. In that vast repertory of obscure learning from which Voltaire and every succeeding scholar have drawn their choicest weapons, the most important and the most insignificant facts, the most sublime speculations to which man can soar, and the most trivial anecdotes of literary biography, lie massed together in all the irony of juxtaposition, developed with the same cold but curious interest, and discussed with the same withering sardonic smile. Never perhaps was there a book that evinced more clearly the vanity of human systems or the disintegrating power of an exhaustive enquiry. To such a writer nothing could be more revolting than

an exclusive worship of one class of opinions, or a forcible suppression of any of the elements of knowledge. Intellectual liberty was the single subject which kindled his cold nature into something resembling enthusiasm. In all he wrote he was its earnest and unwavering advocate, and he diffused his own passion among the scholars and antiquarians of whom he was the chief. He had also the merit of doing more than any previous writer to break the spell which St. Augustine had so long cast over theology. The bitter article on the life of that saint was well adapted as a prelude to an attack upon his opinions.

But while the immense learning and the extraordinary ability of the *Dictionary* of Bayle render it one of the most important pioneers of religious liberty, there was another work in which the same author applied himself more directly to the advocacy of toleration. I mean that treatise on the text 'Compel them to enter in,' in which, abandoning for once the negative and destructive criticism in which he delighted, he undertook to elucidate the bases of a rational belief. This book may, I believe, without exaggeration, be regarded as one of the most valuable contributions to theology during the seventeenth century, and as forming more than any other work the foundation of modern rationalism.[1] While the famous argument of Tillotson against transubstantiation is stated as forcibly as by Tillotson, and the famous argument of Chillingworth on the necessity

[1] Bayle, who was a great coward about his books, published this under the title '*Contrains-les d'entrer, traduit de l'Anglois du Sieur Jean Fox de Bruggs*, par M. J. F.: à Cantorberry, chez Thomas Litwel.'

of private judgment as the basis even of an infallible Church as forcibly as by Chillingworth, the main principles of Kant's great work on the relations of the Bible to the moral faculty are fully anticipated, and are developed in a style that is as remarkable for its clearness, as that of the German philosopher is for its obscurity. At the beginning of this work Bayle disclaims any intention of entering into a critical examination of the passage that he had taken as his motto. His refutation of the persecutor's interpretation rests not on any detailed criticism, but on a broad and general principle. There are certain intellectual and moral truths which are universal among mankind, and which, being our earliest and most vivid intuitions, cannot be questioned without universal scepticism.[1] Thus, for example, the axiom that the whole is greater than a part, represents the highest kind of certainty to which we can possibly attain, and no message purporting to be a revelation can be received in contradiction to it. For the reality of such a revelation, and the justice of such an interpretation, must necessarily be established by a process of reasoning, and no process of reasoning can be so evident as the axiom. In the same way, the fundamental differences between right and wrong are so stamped upon the mind, that they may be taken as the ultimate tests of all ethical teaching. No positive enactments can supersede them. No interpretation of a Divine revelation that violates them can be acknowledged as correct.[2] The intuition by which

[1] See, for a full development of this, ch. i.

[2] 'Sans exception il faut soumettre toutes les lois morales à cette idée naturelle d'équité qui, aussi bien que la lumière métaphysique, illumine tout homme venant au monde.' And therefore he concludes 'que tout dogme particulier,

we know what is right and what is wrong, is clearer than any chain of historic reasoning; and, admitting the reality of a revelation, if the action of the moral faculty were suspended, we should have no means of deciding from what source that revelation had emanated. In judging therefore a moral precept, we should dissociate it as far as possible from all special circumstances that are connected with our passions and our prejudices, and, having reduced it to its simplest and most abstract form, should reject it without hesitation if repugnant to our moral faculty. We should do this even if we can discover no second meaning. But, if tested by this rule, it will appear grossly immoral to compel men to profess a religion they do not believe, and therefore such a course cannot be enjoined by the Deity. Nor is it less irrational than immoral. For one of the first and most obvious consequences of persecution, is to prevent that comparison of the opinions of many classes which is absolutely essential for the discovery of truth. We believe perhaps that our neighbours are immersed in damnable error, but they believe the same thing of us. We may be firmly persuaded of the truth of the opinions we have been taught, but we know that each new research encroaches upon the domain of prejudice, and that the more the horizon of our minds extends, the more necessary we find it to revise both our principles and our arguments. And indeed, when we consider the feebleness of our faculties, the extent to which our conceptions are coloured by the atmosphere in which we live, and

soit qu'on l'avance comme contenu dans l'Écriture, soit qu'on le propose autrement, est faux lorsqu'il est réfuté par les notions claires et distinctes de la lumière naturelle, principalement à l'égard de la morale. (ch. i.)

above all the infinite nature of the Being to whom we aspire, it is impossible to avoid suspecting that all our conceptions on this subject must be partial and distorted, that our attempts to classify religious opinions into absolute truth and falsehood are almost necessarily futile, that different men according to the measure of their faculties obtain some faint glimpses of different aspects of the Divine nature, and that no one has a right to arrogate to himself the possession of such an amount of perfect truth as to render it unnecessary for him to correct and enlarge his views by comparing them with those even of the most ignorant of mankind.[1]

It is not necessary for my purpose to pursue in detail the arguments by which Bayle expanded these principles, or to notice the many important consequences he deduced from them. What I have written will be sufficient to show the general character of his defence of toleration. It will show that Bayle, like Montaigne and Descartes, was tolerant because he was rationalistic, and was rationalistic because he was

[1] 'Tout homme aiant éprouvé qu'il est sujet à l'erreur, et qu'il voit ou croit voir en vieillissant la fausseté de plusieurs choses qu'il avoit cru véritables, doit être toujours disposé à écouter ceux qui lui offrent des instructions en matière même de religion. Je n'en excepte pas les Chrétiens; et je suis persuadé que s'il nous venoit une flotte de la terre australe, où il y eut des gens qui fissent connoître qu'ils souhaitoient de conférer avec nous sur la nature de Dieu et sur le culte que l'homme lui doit, aiant appris que nous avons sur cela des erreurs damnables, nous ne ferions pas mal de les écouter, non-seulement parce que ce seroit le moien de les désabuser des erreurs où nous croirions qu'ils seroient, mais aussi parce que nous pourrions profiter de leurs lumières, et que nous devons nous faire de Dieu une idée si vaste et si infinie que nous pouvons soupçonner qu'il augmentera nos connoissances à l'infini, et par des degrés et des manières dont la variété sera infinie.' (Part i. ch. 5.)

sceptical. Keenly sensible of the weakness of our faculties, and of the imperfection of all dogmatic systems, he resolved to subordinate those systems to the teachings of natural religion, and he therefore protested against a practice which presupposes a degree of certainty that does not exist, and which is repugnant to the dictates of conscience.

The intellectual movement of which these three writers were the representatives, and in a great degree the cause, was clearly reflected in the policy of the two wisest, if not greatest, rulers France has ever possessed. By the Edict of Nantes, Henry IV., whose theological zeal was notoriously languid, solemnly established the principle of toleration. By entering into a war in which his allies were chiefly Protestants, and his enemies Catholics, Richelieu gave a new direction to the sympathies of the people, instituted lines of demarcation which were incompatible with the old spirit of sect, and prepared the way for the general secularisation of politics. The reaction which took place under Louis XIV., although it caused intolerable suffering, and, indeed, partly in consequence of that suffering, had eventually the effect of accelerating the movement. The *dragonnades*, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, formed the most conspicuous events of a period which was preeminently disastrous to France, and the effects of those measures upon French properity were so rapid and so fatal that popular indignation was roused to the highest point. The ruin of the French army, the taxation that ground the people to the dust, the paralysis of industry, the intellectual tyranny, and the almost monastic austerity of the court, had all combined to increase the

discontent, and, as is often the case, the whole weight of this unpopularity was directed against each separate element of tyranny. The recoil was manifested in the wild excesses of the Regency, a period which presents, in many respects, a very striking resemblance to the reign of Charles II. in England. In both cases the reaction against an enforced austerity produced the most unbridled immorality; in both cases this was increased by the decay of those theological notions on which morality was at that time universally based; in both cases the court led the movement; and in both cases that movement resulted in a revolution, which in the order of religion produced toleration, and in the order of politics produced an organic change. That vice has often proved an emancipator of the mind, is one of the most humiliating, but, at the same time, one of the most unquestionable, facts in history. It is the special evil of intolerance that it entwines itself around the holiest parts of our nature, and becomes at last so blended with the sense of duty, that, as has been finely said, 'Conscience, which restrains every other vice, becomes the prompter here.'[1] Two or three times in the history of mankind, its destruction has involved a complete dissolution of the moral principles by which society coheres, and the cradle of religious liberty has been rocked by the worst passions of humanity.

When the moral chaos that followed the death of Louis XIV. was almost universal, when all past beliefs were corroded and vitiated, and had degenerated into empty names or idle superstitions, a great intellectual movement arose, under the guidance of

[1] Grattan.

Voltaire and Rousseau, which was designed to reconstruct the edifice of morality, and which, after a brief but fierce struggle with the civil power, obtained a complete ascendancy on the Continent. The object of these writers was not to erect a new system of positive religion, but rather to remove those systems which then existed, and to prove the adequacy of natural religion to the moral wants of mankind. The first of these tasks was undertaken especially by Voltaire. The second was more congenial to the mind of Rousseau. Both writers exercised a great influence upon the history of toleration; but that influence, if not directly opposed, was at least very different. Voltaire was at all times the unflinching opponent of persecution. No matter how powerful was the persecutor, no matter how insignificant was the victim, the same scathing eloquence was launched against the crime, and the indignation of Europe was soon concentrated upon the oppressor. The fearful storm of sarcasm and invective that avenged the murder of Calas, the magnificent dream in the *Philosophical Dictionary* reviewing the history of persecution from the slaughtered Canaanites to the latest victims who had perished at the stake, the indelible stigma branded upon the persecutors of every age and of every creed, all attested the intense and passionate earnestness with which Voltaire addressed himself to his task. On other subjects a jest or a caprice could often turn him aside. When attacking intolerance, he employed, indeed, every weapon, but he employed them all with the concentrated energy of a profound conviction. His success was equal to his zeal. The spirit of intolerance sank blasted beneath his genius. Wherever his influence passed, the arm of the In

quisitor was palsied, the chain of the captive riven, the prison door flung open. Beneath his withering irony persecution appeared not only criminal but loathsome, and since his time it has ever shrunk from observation, and masked its features under other names. He died, leaving a reputation that is indeed far from spotless, but having done more to destroy the greatest of human curses than any other of the sons of men.

Rousseau had probably quite as strong a sense of the evil of religious persecution as Voltaire, but by a remarkable process of reasoning he justified its worst excesses. He saw very plainly that the intolerance of the past was not due to any accidental circumstances or to any interested motives, but was the normal product of the doctrine of exclusive salvation. He maintained that reciprocity was the condition of toleration, that is to say, that a dominant party is only justified in according toleration where there is some reasonable probability that it will continue when the relative position of the parties is changed. From these two principles he inferred the necessity of the widest intolerance. He told the believers in the doctrine of exclusive salvation that it was their manifest duty to persecute all who differed from them. He told the philosophers that it was necessary to banish all who held the doctrine of exclusive salvation, because that principle was incompatible with the tranquillity of society.[1] This opinion was very

[1] 'Ceux qui distinguent l'intolérance civile et l'intolérance théologique, se trompent à mon avis. Ces deux intolérances sont inséparables. Il est impossible de vivre en paix avec des gens qu'on croit damnés; les aimer seroit haïr Dieu qui les punit: il faut absolument qu'on les ramène ou qu'on les tourmente. .... On doit tolérer toutes les religions qui tolèrent les autres,

natural at a time when the experiment of absolute toleration had scarcely ever been tried, and in the writings of one who was essentially a theorist. We now know that religious liberty has an admirable influence in reducing opinions to their proper level; that it invariably acts upon and modifies doctrines which seem subversive of society; and that, while it leaves the professions of men unchanged, it profoundly alters their realisations. This Rousseau did not perceive, and his blindness was shared by many of his contemporaries. In the French Revolution especially we find the two tendencies—an intense love of religious liberty and a strong bias towards intolerance—continually manifested. In that noble enactment which removed at a single stroke all civil disabilities from Protestants and Jews, we have a splendid instance of the first. In the exile, the spoliation, and, too often, the murder, of Catholic priests, we have a melancholy example of the second. Still it must be admitted in palliation of these excesses that they took place in a paroxysm of the wildest popular excitement, when the minds of men were exasperated to the highest degree by an atrocious and long-continued tyranny, when the very existence of the State was menaced by foreign invaders, and when the bulk of the priesthood were openly conspiring against the liberties of their country. It should also be remembered that the priests had to the very last declared themselves the implacable enemies of religious liberty. At all events, the spirit of tolerance soon regained

autant que leurs dogmes n'ont rien de contraire aux devoirs du citoyen; mais quiconque ose dire hors de l'Église point de salut, doit être chassé de l'État, à moins que l'État ne soit l'Église, et que le prince ne soit le Pontife.' (*Contrat social*, liv iv. c. 8.)

the ascendancy, and when the elements of revolution had been at last consolidated into a regular government, France found herself possessed of a degree of religious liberty which had never been paralleled in any other Roman Catholic country, and which has been barely equalled in the most advanced Protestant ones. As this liberty grew out of the social and intellectual condition which was attained at the Revolution, it was not dependent upon any political combination, and the long series of political changes which have taken place during the last half-century have only fortified and developed it.

The inference to be drawn from this sketch is that the growth of religious liberty in France was at all times directly opposed to the Church, and that its triumph was a measure of her depression. Once, however, in the present century, an attempt was made, under the leadership of Lamennais, to associate Catholicity with the movement of modern civilisation, and it was supported by all the advantages of great genius and great piety, combined with circumstances that were in some respects singularly propitious. The issue of that attempt is profoundly instructive. It is shown in the abandonment of Catholicity by the greatest of its modern champions. It is shown still more strikingly in the solemn and authoritative condemnation of religious liberty by a pope, who justly attributed it to the increasing spirit of rationalism. 'We arrive now,' wrote Gregory XVI., 'at another most fruitful cause of evils, with which we lament that the Church is at present afflicted; namely, indifferentism, or that pernicious opinion which is disseminated everywhere by the artifice of wicked men, according to which eternal salvation may be obtained

by the profession of any faith, if only practice be directed by the rule of right and uprightness. . . . From this noxious fountain of indifferentism flows that absurd and erroneous opinion, or rather that form of madness, which declares that liberty of conscience should be asserted and maintained for every one. For which most pestilential error, that full and immoderate liberty of opinions paves the way which, to the injury of sacred and civil government, is now spread far and wide, and which some with the utmost impudence have extolled as beneficial to religion. But "what," said Augustine, "is more deadly to the soul than the liberty of error?" . . . From this cause, too, arises that never sufficiently to be execrated and to be detested liberty of publication of all books which the populace relish, which some are most ardently extending and promoting. . . . And yet, alas! there are those who are so carried away by impudence that they audaciously assert that the deluge of errors flowing from this source is amply counterbalanced by an occasional book which, amid the transport of iniquity, defends religion and truth. . . . What sane man would permit poison to be publicly scattered about, sold, and even drunk, because there is a remedy by which its effects may possibly be counteracted?'[1]

If we compare the history of English toleration with the history I have just sketched, we shall find some striking points of resemblance; but also some differences which illustrate very happily the nature of the superiority of Protestantism over Catholicism.

[1] Bull delivered at St. Maria Maggiore on the Feast of the Assumption, 1832. The whole bull is given by Lamennais, *Affaires de Rome*, pp. 318–357.

Among Protestants, as among Catholics, the advance of the spirit of rationalism was, as I have said, the necessary antecedent of the victory of toleration. As long as men believed that those who rejected certain opinions were excluded from salvation, they continued to persecute. When the number of what were deemed fundamental doctrines was very great, the persecution was very severe. When the progress of latitudinarianism diminished the number, the circle of toleration was proportionately enlarged; when the government fell into the hands of classes who did not believe or did not realise the doctrine of exclusive salvation, the persecution entirely ceased. Other influences, such as the conflict of interests, the progress of political liberty, the softening of manners, or the benevolent feelings of individual divines, did no doubt affect the movement; but their agency was so subsidiary that, speaking generally, it may be safely asserted, that as the doctrine of exclusive salvation was the source of that fearful mass of suffering which we have reviewed, so the spirit of rationalism which destroyed that doctrine was the measure of religious liberty. It is also true that in Protestant countries as well as in Catholic ones the great majority of the clergy were the bitter enemies of the movement, that they defended entrenchment after entrenchment with a desperate tenacity, and that some of the noblest triumphs of toleration are the memorials of their depression. But at this point the history of the religions divides, and two very important distinctions attest the superiority of Protestantism. Its flexibility is so great that it has been able cordially to coalesce with a tendency which it long resisted, whereas the Church of Rome is even now exhausting

its strength by vain efforts to arrest a spirit with which it is unable to assimilate Besides this, as I have already noticed, toleration, however incompatible with some of the tenets which Protestants have asserted, is essentially a normal result of Protestantism, for it is the direct, logical, and inevitable consequence of the due exercise of private judgment. When men have appreciated the countless differences which the exercise of that judgment must necessarily produce, when they have estimated the intrinsic fallibility of their reason, and the degree in which it is distorted by the will, when, above all, they have acquired that love of truth which a constant appeal to private judgment at last produces, they will never dream that guilt can be associated with an honest conclusion, or that one class of arguments should be stifled by authority. In the seventeenth century, when the controversies with Catholicism had brought the central principle of Protestantism into clear relief, and when the highest genius of Europe still flowed in the channels of divinity, this love of truth was manifested in the greatest works of English theology to a degree which very few departments of literature have ever equalled. Hooker, unfolding with his majestic eloquence the immutable principles of eternal law; Berkeley, the greatest modern master of the Socratic dialogue, asserting the claims of free thought against those who vainly boasted that they monopolised it, and pursuing with the same keen and piercing logic the sophisms that lurked in the commonplaces of fashion and in the obscurest recesses of metaphysics; Chillingworth, drawing with a bold and unfaltering hand the line between certainties and probabilities, eliminating from theology the old

conception of faith considered as an unreasoning acquiescence, and teaching that belief should always be strictly 'proportionable to the credibility of its motives;'—these and such as these, even when they were themselves opposed to religious liberty, were its real founders. Their noble confidence in the power of truth, their ceaseless struggle against the empire of prejudice, their comprehensive views of the laws and limits of the reason, their fervent passionate love of knowledge, and the majesty and dignity of their sentiments, all produced in England a tone of thought that was essentially opposed to persecution, and made their writings the perennial source by which even now the most heroic natures are invigorated. A nation was not far from a just estimate of religious controversies when it had learnt to hold with Milton that 'opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making;' and that, 'if a man believes things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.'[1] It was not far from religious liberty when it could receive the noble language of Chillingworth: 'If men do their best endeavours to free themselves from all errors, and yet fail of it through human frailty, so well I am persuaded of the goodness of God, that if in me alone should meet a confluence of all such errors of all the Protestants in the world that were thus qualified, I should not be so much afraid of them all, as I should be to ask pardon for them.'[2]

There does not appear to have been any general

[1] *Areopagitica.*
[2] *Religion of Protestants*, p. 44 (ed. 1742).

movement in England in favour of religious liberty till the time of the Great Rebellion. The tyranny of Land had then disgusted most men with the system he pursued; the rapid vicissitudes of politics had made all parties endure the bitterness of persecution, and the destruction of the old government had raised some of the ablest Englishmen to power. It would have been strange, indeed, if this great question had been untouched at a period when Cromwell was guiding the administration, and Milton the intellect, of England, and when the enthusiasm of liberty had thrilled through every quarter of the land. The Catholics, indeed, were ruthlessly proscribed, and Drogheda and Wexford tell but too plainly the light in which they were regarded. The Church of England, or, as it was then termed, 'prelacy,' was also legally suppressed, though Cromwell very frequently connived at its worship; but with these exceptions the toleration was very large. There was a division on the subject between the Independents and the Presbyterians. The former, with Cromwell himself, desired the widest liberty of conscience to be extended to all Christians, short of the toleration of 'Popery and Prelacy;' and in 1653 they succeeded in inducing the Parliament to pass a bill to that effect. Supported by the Independents, Cromwell went still further, and gave the Jews once more a legal footing in England, permitted them to celebrate their worship, and protected their persons from injury. The Presbyterians, on the other hand, constantly laboured to thwart the measures of the Protector. They desired that those only should be tolerated who accepted the 'fundamentals' of Christianity, and they drew up a list of these 'fundamentals,' which formed

as elaborate and exclusive a test as the articles of the Church they had defeated.[1] Baxter, however, although he pronounced universal toleration to be 'soul murder,'[2] and struggled vigorously against the policy of the Independents, was, on the whole, somewhat more liberal than his co-religionists, and it should be recorded to his special honour that he applauded the relief that was granted to the Jews, when most of the Presbyterians, under the leadership of Prynne, were denouncing it.

The three principal writers who at this time represented the movement of toleration, were Harrington, Milton, and Taylor—the first of whom dealt mainly

[1] A full description of them is given in Neal's *History of the Puritans*. In 1648 the Presbyterians tried to induce the Parliament to pass a law by which anyone who persistently taught anything contrary to the main propositions comprised in the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation should be punished with death, and all who taught Popish, Arminian, Antinomian, Baptist, or Quaker doctrines, should be imprisoned for life, unless they could find sureties that they would teach them no more. (Neal, vol. ii. pp. 338–340.) The Scotch were unwearied in their efforts to suppress liberty of conscience, and in 1645 their Parliament addressed the English Parliament: 'The parliament of this kingdom is persuaded that the piety and wisdom of the honourable houses will never admit toleration of any sects or schisms contrary to our solemn league and covenant;' and at the same time published a solemn 'declaration against toleration of sectaries and liberty of conscience.' (*Ibid.* pp. 211–222.) Among the notions started by the Anabaptists was that of a sleep of the soul between death and judgment, against which Calvin wrote a book with the barbarous title of *Psychopannychia*. This very harmless notion was one of those which, when obstinately persisted in, the Presbyterians of 1648 wished to punish with an indefinite period of imprisonment. (Neal, vol. ii. p. 339.)

[2] 'Popery, Mahometanism, infidelity, and heathenism are the way to damnation; but liberty to preach up and to practise them is the means to make men Papists, Mahometans, Infidels, and Heathens; therefore this liberty is the way to men's damnation.' (*Holy Commonwealth*, 2nd Preface.)

with its political, and the other two with its theological, aspect. Of the three, it must be acknowledged that the politician took by far the most comprehensive view. He perceived very clearly that political liberty cannot subsist where there is not absolute religious liberty, and that religious liberty does not consist simply of toleration, but implies a total abolition of religious disqualifications. In these respects he alone among his contemporaries anticipated the doctrines of the nineteenth century. 'Where civil liberty is entire,' he wrote, 'it includes liberty of conscience. Where liberty of conscience is entire, it includes civil liberty.' [1] 'Liberty of conscience entire, or in the whole, is where a man, according to the dictates of his own conscience, may have the free exercise of his religion, without impediment to his preferment or employment in the State.' [2]

But if Harrington took the widest view of the rights of conscience, Milton was certainly the advocate who was most likely to have advanced the cause, both on account of his high position in the Commonwealth, and because his opinions on the subject were, for the most part, embodied in a tract, which probably represents the very highest point that English eloquence has attained. The *Paradise Lost* is, indeed, scarcely

[1] *Political Aphorisms*, 23–24.

[2] *A System of Politics*, ch. vi. Passages very similar occur in the *Oceana*, and, indeed, all through the writings of Harrington. The following is, I think, a very remarkable instance of political prescience: 'If it be said that in France there is liberty of conscience in part, it is also plain that while the hierarchy is standing this liberty is falling, and that if ever it comes to pull down the hierarchy, it pulls down that monarchy also. Wherefore the monarchy and hierarchy will be beforehand with it, if they see their true interest.' (*System of Politics*, ch. vi.)

a more glorious monument of the genius of Milton than the *Areopagitica*. If, even at the present day, when the cause for which it was written has long since triumphed, it is impossible to read it without emotion, we can hardly doubt that when it first appeared it exercised a mighty influence over the awakening movement of liberty. Milton advocated tolerance on several distinct grounds. In defence of truth he deemed persecution wholly unnecessary, 'For truth is strong next to the Almighty. She needs no policies or stratagems or licensings to make her victorious. These are the shifts and the defences that error uses against her power.' [1] But if persecution is unnecessary in the defence of truth, it has a fearful efficacy in preventing men from discovering it; and when it is so employed, as infallibility does not exist among mankind, no man can assuredly decide. For truth is scattered far and wide in small portions among mankind, mingled in every system with the dross of error, grasped perfectly by no one, and only in some degree discovered by the careful comparison and collation of opposing systems.[2] To crush some of

[1] *Areopagitica*.

[2] 'Truth, indeed, came once into the world with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on; but when He ascended, and his Apostles after Him were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as the story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osyris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osyris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb, still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall do till her Master's second coming.' (*Areopagitica*.)

these systems, to stifle the voice of argument, to bann and proscribe the press, or to compel it only to utter the sentiments of a single sect, is to destroy the only means we possess of arriving at truth; and as the difficulty of avoiding error is under the most favourable circumstances very great, it may be presumed that the doctrines which it is necessary to hold are but few, and where the error is not fundamental it should not be suppressed by law. All the differences that divide Protestants are upon matters not bearing on salvation, and therefore all classes—Socinians, Arians, and Anabaptists, as well as others—should be tolerated.[1] The Catholics, however, Milton rigidly excludes from the smallest measure of tolerance, and the reason he gives is very remarkable. The intriguing policy of its priesthood might at that time, at least, furnish a plausible ground, but Milton, though evidently believing it to be so, expressly refuses to base his decision upon it. His exclusion of Catholics rests upon a distinct religious principle. The worship of the Catholics is idolatrous, and the Old Testament forbids the toleration of idolatry.[2]

[1] See his tract, *Of true Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration*, published in 1673. He does not, however, seem to have understood the Socinian heresy exactly as it is now understood.

[2] 'As for tolerating the exercise of their (the Catholics') religion, supposing their State activities not to be dangerous, I answer that toleration is either public or private, and the exercise of their religion as far as it is idolatrous can be tolerated neither way: not publicly, without grievous and unsufferable scandal given to all conscientious beholders; not privately, without great offence to God, declared against all kind of idolatry though secret. Ezech. viii. 7, 8, and verse 12, &c., and it appears by the whole chapter, that God was no less offended with those secret idolatries than, with those in public, and no less provoked than to bring on and hasten his judgments on the whole land for them also. (*Ibid.*) It is of course open to

The last name I have mentioned is Taylor, whose *Liberty of Prophesying* is, if we except *The Religion of Protestants*, unquestionably the most important contribution of the Anglican Church towards toleration.[1] It is scarcely possible to read it without arriving at an invincible conviction that it expressed the genuine sentiments of its author. Its argument is based upon latitudinarian principles, which appear more or less in all his writings, and its singularly indulgent tone towards the Catholics, its earnest advocacy of their claims to toleration,[2] which would hardly have been expected from so uncompromising a Protestant as the author of *The Dissuasive from Popery*, was certainly not intended to propitiate the Puritans. Besides this, the whole book is animated with a warmth and tenderness of charity, a catholicity of temper biassing the judgment in favour of mercy, which could scarcely have been counterfeited. This was indeed at all times the most amiable characteristic of Taylor. His very style—like the murmur of a deep sea, bathed in the sun—so richly coloured by an imagination that was never disunited from the affections; and at the same time so sweetly cadenced, so full of gentle and varied melodies, reflects his character; and not the less so because of a certain want

supposition, and not very improbable, that this passage being written after the Restoration, when Catholicism had become a serious menace to the liberty of England, emanated rather from the politician than from the theologian.

[1] Chillingworth published *The Religion of Protestants* in 1637, one year before he took orders—which last step he had many scruples about.

[2] Sec. 22. He desires that they should be absolutely tolerated, unless, indeed, they openly preach such doctrines as the non-observance of faith with heretics, or that a pope can absolve subjects from the oath of allegiance, or that an heretical prince may be slain by his people.

of nervousness and consistency, a certain vagueness and almost feebleness which it occasionally displays. The arguments on which he based his cause are very simple. He believed that the great majority of theological propositions cannot be clearly deduced from Scripture, and that it is therefore not necessary to hold them. The Apostles' Creed he regarded as containing the doctrines which can certainly be established, and, therefore, as comprising all that are fundamental. All errors on questions beyond these do not affect salvation, and ought, in consequence, to be tolerated. As far, therefore, as he was a sceptic, Taylor was a rationalist, and as far as he was a rationalist he was an advocate of toleration. Unfortunately for his reputation, he wrote *The Liberty of Prophesying* in exile, and, to a certain extent, abandoned its principles when his Church regained her ascendancy.[1]

All through the period of the Restoration, the movement of toleration continued. The vast amount of scepticism existing in the country caused the governing class to look with comparative indifference upon doctrinal differences, and the general adoption of the principles of Bacon and of Descartes, by the ablest writers, accelerated the movement, which began to appear in the most unexpected quarters.[2]

[1] On which Coleridge remarks, I think a little too severely: 'If Jeremy Taylor had not in effect retracted after the Restoration, if he had not, as soon as the Church had gained power, most basely disclaimed and disavowed the principle of toleration, and apologised for the publication by declaring it to have been a *ruse de guerre*, currying pardon for his past liberalism by charging, and most probably slandering, himself with the guilt of falsehood, treachery and hypocrisy, his character as a man would have been almost stainless.' (*Notes on English Divines*, vol. i. p. 209.)

[2] E. g. in Quakerism—that strange form of distorted rationalism, which, while proclaiming doctrines absolutely

The expression of that movement in the Anglican Church is to be found in the latitudinarian school, which followed closely in the steps of Chillingworth. Like the Independents and Presbyterians of the Commonwealth, like the greater number of the opponents of the execution of Servetus, the members of this school usually based their advocacy of tolerance on the ground of the distinction between fundamentals and non-fundamentals, and the degree in which they restricted or expanded the first depended mainly on their scepticism. Glanvil, who was, perhaps, the most uncompromising of these writers, having, in his treatise *On the Vanity of Dogmatising*, preached almost universal scepticism, proceeded in consequence to advocate almost universal toleration. He drew up a catalogue of necessary articles of belief, which was of such a nature that scarcely anyone was excluded, and he contended that no one should be punished for errors that are not fundamental. The effects of the tendency were soon manifested in the laws, and in 1677 the power of consigning heretics to death was withdrawn from the Church.

It appears, then, that the first stage of toleration in England was due to the spirit of scepticism encroaching upon the doctrine of exclusive salvation. But what is especially worthy of remark is, that the most illustrious of the advocates of toleration were men who were earnestly attached to positive religion, and that the writings in which they embodied their arguments are even now among the classics of the

subversive of national independence, and occasionally producing extraordinary extravagances of conduct, maintained in the most unequivocal language the absolute inefficiency of mere religious ceremonies, the possibility of salvation in any Church, and the injustice of every form of persecution.

Church. *The Religion of Protestants* and *The Liberty of Prophesying* are justly regarded as among the greatest glories of Anglicanism, and Glanvil, Owen, and Hales are still honoured names in theology. This is well worthy of notice when we consider the unmixed scepticism of those who occupied a corresponding position in France; but there is another circumstance which greatly heightens the contrast. At the very period when the principle of toleration was first established in England by the union of the spirit of scepticism with the spirit of Christianity, the greatest living antichristian writer was Hobbes, who was perhaps the most unflinching of all the supporters of persecution. It was his leading doctrine that the civil power, and the civil power alone, has an absolute right to determine the religion of the nation, and that, therefore, any refusal to acquiesce in that religion is essentially an act of rebellion.

But while the rationalistic spirit had thus found a firm footing within the Church, it was strongly opposed and generally overborne by the dogmatic spirit which was represented by the great majority of the clergy, and which radiated with especial energy from Oxford. Taylor, as we have seen, recoiled before the prevailing intolerance. Glanvil sank into considerable discredit, from which, however, he in some degree emerged by his defence of witchcraft. Heretics were no longer liable to be burnt, but all through the reign of Charles II., and during the greater part of the reign of James, the Dissenters endured every minor form of persecution. At last, James, irritated by the penal laws that oppressed his co-religionists, determined to proclaim toleration with a high hand. That he did this solely with a view to

the welfare of his own Church, and not at all from any love of toleration, may be inferred with considerable certainty from the fact that he had himself been one of the most relentless of persecutors; but it is not impossible, and, I think, not altogether improbable, that he would have accepted a measure of toleration which relieved the Roman Catholics, without embarking in the very hazardous enterprise of establishing Catholic ascendancy. The sequel is too well known to require repetition. Every educated Englishman knows how the great majority of the clergy, in spite of the doctrine of passive obedience they had taught, and of the well-known decision of Taylor that even an illegal ordinance should be accepted, refused to read the declaration; how their attitude endeared them to the people, and accelerated the triumph of the Revolution; how they soon imprudently withdrew from, and opposed the movement they had produced; how upon the achievement of the Revolution they sank into a condition of almost unequalled political depression; and how the consequence of that depression was the Toleration Act, which, though very imperfect according to our present notions, is justly regarded as the Magna Charta of religious liberty. Those who defended it were of the same class as the previous advocates of toleration. Somers and the other leading Whigs were members of the Anglican Church. Locke was in religion the avowed disciple of Chillingworth, and in politics the highest representative of the principles of Harrington; and it was on the double ground of the sanctity of an honest conviction, and of the danger of enlarging the province of the civil magistrate, that he defended toleration against the theologians of

Oxford.[1] While the Toleration Act and the establishment of the Scotch Kirk gave virtual freedom of worship to all Protestants, the abrogation of the censorship established freedom of discussion. The battle was thus won. Intolerance became an exception and an anomaly, and it was simply a question of time how soon it should be expelled from its last entrenchments.

We have seen that the spirit of intolerance was at first equally strong in the Church of Rome and in the reformed churches, and that its extinction both in Catholic and Protestant countries was due to the spirit of rationalism. We have seen that in both cases the clergy were the untiring enemies of this the noblest of all the conquests of civilisation, and that it was only by a long series of anti-ecclesiastical revolutions that the sword was at last wrung from their grasp. We have seen, too, that while the Church of Rome was so constituted, that an anti-ecclesiastical movement where she ruled invariably became anti-christian, the flexibility of Protestantism was so great that rationalism found free scope for action within its pale. Discarding more and more their dogmatic character, and transforming themselves according to the exigencies of the age, the churches of the Reformation have in many cases allied themselves with the most daring speculations, and have in most cases cordially coalesced with the spirit of toleration. When a country which is nominally Roman Catholic is very tolerant, it may be inferred with almost absolute certainty that the social and intellectual influence of the Church is comparatively

[1] His opponent was Archdeacon Proast, whose pamphlets were printed in the University.

small; but England and America conclusively prove that a nation may be very tolerant, and at the same time profoundly Protestant. When in a Roman Catholic country the human intellect on the highest of subjects pursues its course with unshackled energy, the freethinker is immediately severed from the traditions, the worship, the moralising influences of his Church; but Germany has already shown, and England is beginning to show, that the boldest speculations may be wedded to a Protestant worship, and may find elements of assimilation in a Protestant creed. It is this fact which is the most propitious omen of the future of Protestantism. For there is no such thing as a theological antiseptic. Every profound intellectual change the human race has yet undergone, has produced at least some modification of all departments of speculative belief. Much that is adapted to one phase of civilisation becomes useless or pernicious in another. The moral element of a religion appeals to forms of emotion which are substantially unchanged by time, but the intellectual conceptions that are associated with it assume their tone and colour from the intellectual atmosphere of the age. Protestantism as a dogmatic system makes no converts, but it has shown itself capable of blending with and consecrating the prevailing rationalism. Compare the series of doctrines I have reviewed in the present chapter with the habitual teaching of modern divines, and the change is sufficiently apparent. All those notions concerning the damnation of unbaptised infants, or of the heathen, or of the heretic, which once acted so great a part in the history of Christendom, are becoming rapidly unrealised and inoperative, where they are not already openly denied. Nor has it been other-

wise with persecution. For centuries the Protestant clergy preached it as a duty; when driven from this position, they almost invariably defended its less atrocious forms, disguising it under other names. At last this passed away. Only a few years ago, six ladies were exiled from Sweden because they had embraced the Roman Catholic faith;[1] but a striking example soon proved how uncongenial were such measures with the Protestantism of the nineteenth century. An address drawn up by some of the most eminent English opponents of Catholicism, and signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, protested against the act as an outrage to the first principles of Protestantism.

The history which I have traced in the present chapter naturally leads to some reflections on the ultimate consequences of the rationalistic method of investigation as distinguished from the system of coercion. The question, What is truth? has certainly no prospect of obtaining a speedy answer; but the question, What is the spirit of truth? may be discussed with much greater prospect of agreement. By the spirit of truth, I mean that frame of mind in which men who acknowledge their own fallibility, and who desire above all things to discover what is true, should adjudicate between conflicting arguments. As soon as they have distinctly perceived that reason, and reason alone, should determine their opinions,

[1] *Annuaire des Deux Mondes*, 1858, p. 463. In the previous year an attempt had been made by the Government to moderate the fierce intolerance of the Swedish law; but the bill, though adopted by the Houses of the Middle Class and of the Peasants, was rejected by those of the Nobles and of the Clergy. A slight — unfortunately very slight — modification was effected in 1860.

that they never can be legitimately certain of the truth of what they have been taught till they have both examined its evidence and heard what can be said against it, and that any influence that introduces a bias of the will is necessarily an impediment to enquiry, the whole theory of persecution falls at once to the ground. For the object of the persecutor is to suppress one portion of the elements of discussion; it is to determine the judgment by an influence other than reason; it is to prevent that freedom of enquiry which is the sole method we possess of arriving at truth. The persecutor never can be certain that he is not persecuting truth rather than error, but he may be quite certain that he is suppressing the spirit of truth. And indeed it is no exaggeration to say that the doctrines I have reviewed represent the most skilful, and at the same time most successful, conspiracy against that spirit that has ever existed among mankind. Until the seventeenth century, every mental disposition which philosophy pronounces to be essential to a legitimate research was almost uniformly branded as a sin, and a large proportion of the most deadly intellectual vices were deliberately inculcated as virtues. It was a sin to doubt the opinions that had been instilled in childhood before they had been examined. It was a virtue to hold them with unwavering, unreasoning credulity. It was a sin to notice and develope to its full consequences every objection to those opinions, it was a virtue to stifle every objection as a suggestion of the devil. It was sinful to study with equal attention and with an indifferent mind the writings on both sides, sinful to resolve to follow the light of evidence wherever it might lead, sinful to remain poised in doubt between conflicting opinions, sinful to give

only a qualified assent to indecisive arguments, sinful even to recognise the moral or intellectual excellence of opponents. In a word, there is scarcely a disposition that marks the love of abstract truth, and scarcely a rule which reason teaches as essential for its attainment, that theologians did not for centuries stigmatise as offensive to the Almighty. By destroying every book that could generate discussion, by diffusing through every field of knowledge a spirit of boundless credulity, and, above all, by persecuting with atrocious cruelty those who differed from their opinions, they succeeded for a long period in almost arresting the action of the European mind, and in persuading men that a critical, impartial, and enquiring spirit was the worst form of vice. From this frightful condition Europe was at last rescued by the intellectual influences that produced the Reformation, by the teaching of those great philosophers who clearly laid down the conditions of enquiry, and by those bold innovators who, with the stake of Bruno and Vanini before their eyes, dared to challenge directly the doctrines of the past. By these means the spirit of philosophy or of truth became prominent, and the spirit of dogmatism, with all its consequences, was proportionately weakened. As long as the latter spirit possessed an indisputable ascendancy, persecution was ruthless, universal, and unquestioned. When the former spirit became more powerful, the language of anathema grew less peremptory. Exceptions and qualifications were introduced; the full meaning of the words was no longer realised; persecution became languid; it changed its character; it exhibited itself rather in a general tendency than in overt acts; it grew apologetical, timid, and evasive.

In one age the persecutor burnt the heretic; in another, he crushed him with penal laws; in a third, he withheld from him places of emolument and dignity; in a fourth, he subjected him to the excommunication of society. Each stage of advancing toleration marks a stage of the decline of the spirit of dogmatism and of the increase of the spirit of truth.

Now, if I have at all succeeded in carrying the reader with me in the foregoing arguments, it will appear plain that the doctrine of exclusive salvation represents a point from which two entirely different systems diverge. In other words, those who reject the doctrine cannot pause there. They will inevitably be carried on to a series of doctrines, to a general conception of religion that is radically and fundamentally different from the conception of the adherent of the doctrine. I speak of course of those who hold one or other opinion with realising earnestness. Of these it may, I believe, be truly said, that according to their relation to this doctrine they will be divided into different classes, with different types of character, different standards of excellence, different conceptions of the whole spirit of theology. The man who with realising earnestness believes the doctrine of exclusive salvation, will habitually place the dogmatic above the moral element of religion; he will justify, or at least very slightly condemn, pious frauds or other immoral acts that support his doctrines; he will judge men mainly according to their opinions, and not according to their acts; he will lay greater stress on those duties that grow out of an ecclesiastical system than on those which grow out of the moral nature of mankind; he will obtain the certainty that is necessary to his peace by excluding

every argument that is adverse to his belief; and he will above all manifest a constant tendency to persecution. On the other hand, men who have been deeply imbued with the spirit of earnest and impartial enquiry, will invariably come to value such a disposition more than any particular doctrines to which it may lead them; they will deny the necessity of correct opinions; they will place the moral far above the dogmatic side of their faith; they will give free scope to every criticism that restricts their belief; and they will value men according to their acts, and not at all according to their opinions. The first of these tendencies is essentially Roman Catholic. The second is essentially rationalistic.

It is impossible, I think, to doubt that, since Descartes, the higher thought of Europe has been tending steadily in this second direction, and that sooner or later the spirit of truth will be regarded in Christendom, as it was regarded by the philosophers of ancient Greece, as the loftiest form of virtue. We are indeed still far from that point. A love of truth that seriously resolves to spare no prejudice and accord no favour, that prides itself on basing every conclusion on reason or conscience, and in rejecting every illegitimate influence, is not common in one sex, is still rarer in the other, and is very far indeed from being the actuating spirit of all who boast most loudly of their freedom from prejudice. Still it is to this that we are steadily approximating; and there probably never before was a period since the triumph of Christianity, when men were judged so little according to their belief, and when history, and even ecclesiastical history, was written with such earnest, such scrupulous impartiality. In the poli-

tical sphere the victory has almost been achieved. In the social sphere, although the amalgamation of different religious communities is still very imperfect, and although a change of religion by one member of a family not unfrequently produces a rupture and causes a vast amount of the more petty forms of persecution, the improvement has been rapid and profound. The fierce invectives which Protestant and Catholic once interchanged, are now for the most part confined to a small and select circle of the more ardent disciples of either creed: and it is commonly admitted among educated men, that those who, under the sense of duty, and at the cost of great mental suffering, have changed their religion, ought not to be pronounced the most culpable of mankind, even though they have rejected the opinions of their censor. This is at least a vast improvement since the time when the term 'miscreant' or misbeliever was first made a synonym for the most atrocious of criminals, and when apostasy was universally regarded as the worst of crimes. Already, under the same influences, education at the Universities has in a great measure lost its old exclusive character; and members of different creeds having been admitted within their pale, men are brought in contact with representatives of more than one class of opinions at a time when they are finally deciding what class of opinions they will embrace. There cannot, I think, be much doubt that the same movement must eventually modify profoundly the earlier stages of education. If our private judgment is the sole rule by which we should form our opinions, it is obviously the duty of the educator to render that judgment as powerful, and at the same time to preserve it as unbiassed, as pos-

sible. To impose an elaborate system of prejudices on the yet undeveloped mind, and to entwine those prejudices with all the most hallowed associations of childhood, is most certainly contrary to the spirit of the doctrine of private judgment. A prejudice may be true or false; but if private judgment is to decide between opinions, it is, as far as that judgment is concerned, necessarily an evil, and especially when it appeals strongly to the affections. The sole object of man is not to search for truth; and it may be, and undoubtedly often is, necessary for other purposes to instil into the mind of the child certain opinions, which he will have hereafter to reconsider. Yet still it is manifest that those who appreciate this doctrine of private judgment as I have described it, will desire that those opinions should be few, that they should rest as lightly as possible upon the mind, and should be separated as far as possible from the eternal principles of morality.

Such seem the general outlines of the movement around us. Unhappily it is impossible to contemplate it without feeling that the Protestantism of Chillingworth is much less a reality to be grasped than an ideal to which, at least in our age, we can most imperfectly approximate. The overwhelming majority of the human race necessarily accept their opinions from authority. Whether they do so avowedly, like the Catholics, or unconsciously, like most Protestants, is immaterial. They have neither time nor opportunity to examine for themselves. They are taught certain doctrines on disputed questions as if they were unquestionable truths, when they are incapable of judging, and every influence is employed to deepen the impression. This is the true origin of their

belief. Not until long years of mental conflict have passed can they obtain the inestimable boon of an assured and untrammelled mind. The fable of the ancient [1] is still true. The woman even now sits at the portal of life, presenting a cup to all who enter in which diffuses through every vein a poison that will cling to them for ever. The judgment may pierce the clouds of prejudice. In the moments of her strength she may even rejoice and triumph in her liberty, yet the conceptions of childhood will long remain latent in the mind, to reappear in every hour of weakness, when the tension of the reason is relaxed, and when the power of old associations is supreme.[2] It is not surprising that very few should

[1] Cebes.

[2] This very painful recurrence, which occupies such an important place in all religious biographies, seems to be attached to an extremely remarkable and obscure department of mental phenomena which has only been investigated with earnestness within the last few years, and which is termed by psychologists, 'latent consciousness,' and by physiologists 'unconscious cerebration' or the 'reflex action of the brain.' That certain facts remain so hidden in the mind, that it is only by a strong act of volition they can be recalled to recollection, is a fact of daily experience; but it is now fully established that a multitude of events which are so completely forgotten that no effort of will can revive them, and that their statement calls up no reminiscence, may nevertheless be, so to speak, imbedded in the memory, and may be reproduced with intense vividness under certain physical conditions. This is especially the result of some diseases. Thus, e. g. there is a case on record of an ignorant woman repeating, in a delirium, certain words which were recognised as Hebrew and Chaldaic. When she returned to consciousness she knew nothing of these words, she had no notion of their meaning; and being told that they were Hebrew and Chaldaic, she could recollect no possible way in which she could have acquired them. A searching investigation into her antecedents was instituted; and it was found that when a girl she had been servant to a clergyman who was accustomed to walk up and down his passage reading those languages. The words were hidden in the

possess the courage and the perseverance to encounter the mental struggle. The immense majority either

mind, were reproduced by disease, and were forgotten when the disease had passed. (Carpenter, *Human Physiology*, p. 808.) It is said that a momentary review of numbers of long-forgotten incidents of life is the last phenomenon of consciousness before the insensibility that precedes drowning. But not only are facts retained in the memory of which we are unconscious, the mind itself is also perpetually acting—pursuing trains of thought automatically, of which we have no consciousness. Thus it has been often observed, that a subject which at night appears tangled and confused, acquires a perfect clearness and arrangement during sleep. Thus the schoolboy knows that verses learnt by heart just before sleep are retained with much greater facility than those which are learnt at any other time; thus, in the course of recollection, two facts will often rise in succession which appear to have no connection whatever; but a careful investigation will prove that there is some forgotten link of association which the mind had pursued, but of which we are entirely unconscious. It is in connection with these facts that we should view that reappearance of opinions, modes of thought, and emotions belonging to a former stage of our intellectual history, that is search the result of the automatical action of the mind when volition is altogether suspended. It is especially common (or, at least, especially manifest) in languor, in disease, and, above all, in sleep. M. Maury, who has investigated the subject with his usual great ability, has shown that in sleep hyperæsthesia of the memory is very common; that not only facts, but processes of thought that belong altogether to the past, are reproduced; and that a frequent dreamer will often be brought under the influence of vices in which he had once indulged, but by which in his waking hours he is rarely or never overcome. There can be little doubt that when we are actively reasoning this automatic action of the mind still continues, but the ideas and trains of thought that are thus produced are so combined and transformed by the reason, that we are unconscious of their existence. They exist, nevertheless, and form (or greatly contribute to) our mental bias. It is impossible to review this most suggestive subject without suspecting that the saying, 'habit is a second nature,' represents more than a metaphor, that the reason is much more closely connected with the will than is generally imagined; and that the origin of most of those opinions we attribute to pure reasoning, is more composite than we suppose. This impor-

never examine the opinions they have inherited, or examine them so completely under the dominating influence of the prejudice of education, that whatever may have been the doctrines they have been taught, they conclude that they are so unquestionably true, that nothing but a judicial blindness can cause their rejection. Of the few who have obtained a glimpse of higher things, a large proportion cannot endure a conflict to which old associations and, above all, the old doctrine of the guilt of error, lend such a peculiar bitterness; they stifle the voice of reason, they turn away from the path of knowledge, they purchase peace at the expense of truth. This is, indeed, in our day, the most fatal of all the obstacles to enquiry. It was not till the old world had been reduced to chaos that the Divine voice said, 'Let there be light;' and in the order of knowledge, as in the order of nature, dissolution must commonly precede formation. There is a period in the history of the enquirer when old opinions have been shaken or destroyed, and new opinions have not yet been formed, a period of doubt, of terror, and of darkness, when the voice of the dogmatist has not lost its

tant subject was first incidentally pointed out by Leibnitz. After his time, it seems, except in as far as it was connected with the animism of Stahl, to have been almost unnoticed till very recently. Sir W. Hamilton (in his *Essays*) has treated it from a psychological, and Drs. Laycock (*The Brain and the Mind*) and Carpenter (*Human Physiology*, pp. 799–819) from a medical, point of view. Mr. Morell, following in the steps of Stahl, has availed himself of it (*Mental Philosophy*) to explain the laws of generation, ascribing the formation of the fœtus to the unconscious action of the soul; and M. Maury (*Le Sommeil et les Rêves*) has shown its connection with the phenomena of sleep. See, too, De Quincey's *Opium-Eater*, pp. 259–261, ed. 1864; Tissot, *Sur la Vie*; and Saisset, *L'Ame et la Vie*.

power, and the phantoms of the past still hover over the mind, a period when every landmark is lost to sight, and every star is veiled, and the soul seems drifting helpless and rudderless before the destroying blast. It is in this season of transition that the temptations to stifle reason possess a fearful power. It is when contrasting the tranquillity of past assurance with the feverish paroxysms that accompany enquiry, that the mind is most likely to abandon the path of truth. It is so much easier to assume than to prove; it is so much less painful to believe than to doubt: there is such a charm in the repose of prejudice, when no discordant voice jars upon the harmony of belief; there is such a thrilling pang when cherished dreams are scattered, and old creeds abandoned, that it is not surprising that men should close their eyes to the unwelcome light. Hence the tenacity exhibited by systems that have long since been disproved. Hence the oscillation and timidity that characterise the research of most, and the indifference to truth and the worship of expediency that cloud the fair promise of not a few.

In our age these struggles are diffused over a very wide circle, and are felt by men of many grades of intellect. This fact, however, while it accounts for the perturbation and instability that characterise a large portion of contemporary literature, should materially lighten the burden of each individual enquirer. The great majority of the ablest intellects of the century have preceded him, and their genius irradiates the path. The hands of many sympathisers are extended to assist him. The disintegration around him will facilitate his course. He who, believing that the [redacted] for truth can never be offensive to the God of

truth, pursues his way with an unswerving energy, may not unreasonably hope that he may assist others in their struggle towards the light, and may in some small degree contribute to that consummation when the professed belief shall have been adjusted to the requirements of the age, when the old tyranny shall have been broken, and the anarchy of transition shall have passed away.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECULARISATION OF POLITICS.

THE evidence I have collected in the preceding chapters will be sufficient to exhibit the nature of the rationalistic movement, and also the process by which it has been developed. To establish the first, I have reviewed a long series of theological conceptions which the movement has weakened or transformed. To establish the second, I have shown that the most important changes were much less the results of direct controversy than of the attraction of the prevailing modes of thought, which themselves represented the convergence of a great variety of theological influences. In the remainder of this work, I propose to trace more fully than I have yet had occasion to do, the relations of the rationalistic movement to the political and economical history of Europe, or, in other words, to show on the one hand how the theological development has modified political and economical theories; and, on the other hand, how the tendencies produced by these have reacted upon theology.

But, before entering upon this field, it will perhaps not be altogether unnecessary to remind the reader once more of the main principle upon which the relevance of this species of narrative depends. It is that the speculative opinions which are embraced by

any large body of men are accepted, not on account of the arguments upon which they rest, but on account of a predisposition to receive them. This predisposition depends with many persons entirely upon the circumstances of their position, that is to say, upon the associations of childhood, friendship, or interest, and is of such a nature as altogether to dispense with arguments. With others, it depends chiefly upon the character of their minds, which induces them to embrace one class of arguments rather than another. This intellectual character, again, results partly from natural and innate peculiarities, and partly from the totality of influences that act upon the mind. For the mind of man is no inert receptacle of knowledge, but absorbs and incorporates into its own constitution the ideas which it receives. In a healthy condition, increased knowledge implies an increased mental capacity, and each peculiar department of study not merely comprises a peculiar kind of information, but also produces a peculiar ply and tendency of judgment. All minds are more or less governed by what chemists term the laws of elective affinity. Like naturally tends to like. The predominating passion of every man colours the whole train of his reasoning, and in every subject he examines, he instinctively turns to that aspect which is most congruous to his favourite pursuit.

If this be so, we should naturally expect that politics, which occupy so large a place in the minds of men, should at all times have exercised a considerable influence on the tone of thought from which theological opinions arise, and that a general tendency to restrict the province of theology should have resulted in a secularisation of politics. In the present

chapter, I shall examine the stages of that secularisation and the minor changes that are connected with it. The subject will naturally divide itself into two parts. We shall first see how theological interests gradually ceased to be a main object of political combinations; and afterwards, how, by the repudiation of the divine right of kings and the assertion of the social contract, the basis of authority was secularised.

If we take a broad view of the course of history, and examine the relations of great bodies of men, we find that religion and patriotism are the chief moral influences to which they have been subject, and that the separate modifications and mutual interaction of these two agents may almost be said to constitute the moral history of mankind. For some centuries before the introduction of Christianity, patriotism was in most countries the presiding moral principle, and religion occupied an entirely subordinate position. Almost all those examples of heroic self-sacrifice, of passionate devotion to an unselfish aim, which antiquity affords, were produced by the spirit of patriotism. Decius and Regulus, Leonidas and Harmodius, are the pagan parallels to Christian martyrs.[1] Nor was it only in the great crises of national history that this spirit was evoked. The pride of patriotism, the sense of dignity which it inspires, the close bond of sympathy produced by a common aim, the energy and elasticity of character which are the parents of great

[1] It is worthy of notice, that the first development of sculpture, which in almost all other nations was religious, in Rome appears to have been patriotic —the objects of representation being not the gods, but the true national ideals—the heroes of Rome. (See O. Müller, *Manuel d'Archéologie*, vol. i. pp. 251–2.)

enterprises, were manifested habitually in the leading nations of antiquity. The spirit of patriotism pervaded all classes. It formed a distinct type of character, and was the origin both of many virtues and of many vices.

If we attempt to estimate the moral condition of such a phase of society, we must in some respects place it extremely high. Patriotism has always proved the best cordial of humanity, and all the sterner and more robust virtues were matured to the highest degree by its power. No other influence diffuses abroad so much of that steady fortitude which is equally removed from languor and timidity on the one hand, and from feverish and morbid excitement upon the other. In nations that have been long pervaded by a strong and continuous political life, the pulse beats high and steadily, habits of self-reliance are formed which enable men to confront danger with a calm intrepidity, and to retain a certain sobriety of temperament amid the most trying vicissitudes. A capacity for united action, for self-sacrifice, for long and persevering exertion, becomes general. A high, though sometimes rather capricious, standard of honour is formed, and a stern simplicity of habits encouraged. It is probable that in the best days of the old classic republics the passions of men were as habitually under control, national tastes as simple and chastened, and acts of heroism as frequent and as grand, as in the noblest periods of subsequent history. Never did men pass through life with a more majestic dignity, or meet death with a more unfaltering calm. The full sublimity of the old classic type has never been reproduced in its perfection, but the spirit that formed it has often

breathed over the feverish struggles of modern life, and has infused into society a heroism and a fortitude that have proved the invariable precursors of regeneration.

All this was produced among nations that were notoriously deficient in religious feeling, and had, indeed, degraded their religion into a mere function of the State. The disinterested enthusiasm of patriotism had pervaded and animated them, and had called into habitual action many of the noblest moral capacities of mankind.

To this picture there is, however, a melancholy reverse. If the Roman civilisation exhibited to a very high degree the sterner virtues, it was pre-eminently deficient in the gentler ones. The pathos of life was habitually repressed. Suffering and weakness met with little sympathy or assistance. The slave, the captive, the sick, the helpless, were treated with cold indifference, or with merciless ferocity. The hospital and the refuge for the afflicted were unknown. The spectacle of suffering and of death was the luxury of all classes. An almost absolute destruction of the finer sensibilities was the consequence of the universal worship of force. The existence of the gods was, indeed, recognised, but the ideals of excellence were not sought on the heights of Olympus, but in the annals of Roman prowess. There was little sense of the superhuman, no conception of sin, no desire to rise above the things of earth; pride was deemed the greatest of virtues, and humility the most contemptible of weaknesses. The welfare of the State being the highest object of unselfish devotion, virtue and vice were often measured by that standard,

and the individual was habitually sacrificed to the community.

But perhaps the greatest vice of the old form of patriotism was the narrowness of sympathy which it produced. Outside the circle of their own nation all men were regarded with contempt and indifference, if not with absolute hostility. Conquest was the one recognised form of national progress, and the interests of nations were, therefore, regarded as directly opposed. The intensity with which a man loved his country was a measure of the hatred which he bore to those who were without it. The enthusiasm which produced the noblest virtues in a narrow circle was the direct and powerful cause of the strongest international antipathies.

In Judæa the religious system occupied a more prominent position than among the Greeks or Romans, but it had been indissolubly connected with national interests, and the attachment to it was in reality only a form and aspect of patriotism. Whatever opinion may be held as to whether a future life was intended to be among the elements of the Levitical revelation, there can be no question that the primary incentives which that revelation offered were of a patriotic order. The devotion of the people to their religious system was to be the measure of their national prosperity. When their faith burnt with a strong and unsullied flame, every enemy succumbed beneath their arms; but whenever idolatry had corrupted their devotions, a hostile army encircled Mount Moriah. All the traditions of their religion were identified with splendid national triumphs. The rescue from Egypt, the conquest of Canaan, and the massacre of its inhabitants, the exploits of the inspired

warriors who had broken the chains of a foreign master, the destruction of the hosts of the Assyrian, were all legends interweaving in the Jewish mind the association of the Church and of the State. The spirit of sect, or an attachment not to abstract principles, but to a definite and organised ecclesiastical institution, is a spirit essentially similar to patriotism, but is directed to a different object, and is therefore, in most cases, hostile to it. In Judæa the spirit of patriotism and the spirit of sect were united; each intensified the other, and the exclusive intolerance which is the result of each existed with double virulence.

Such was the condition of the Pagan and Jewish world when the sublime doctrine of universal brotherhood was preached to mankind. After eighteen hundred years men are only beginning to realise it, and at the time when it was first proclaimed it was diametrically opposed to the most cherished prejudices of the age.

In Judæa the spirit of an exclusive patriotism not only pervaded the national mind, but was also at this period an intensely active moral principle. In the Roman Empire patriotism was little more than an intellectual conception; society was in a condition of moral dissolution, and disinterested enthusiasm was extremely rare. The fortunes of the infant Church were, probably, in no slight measure determined by these circumstances. In Judæa it was rejected with indignant scorn. In the Roman Empire it obtained a marvellous triumph, but it triumphed only by transforming itself under the influence of the spirit of sect. The passion for the visible and material which in that age it was impossible to escape —which incrusted the teachings of the Church with

an elaborate and superstitious ritualism, designed to appeal to and enthral the senses, and converted its simple moral principles into a complicated creed—acted with equal force upon its government, and transformed it into a highly centralised monarchy, pervaded by a spirit of exclusiveness very similar to that which had animated the old Roman republic. The spirit of sect was, indeed, far stronger and more virulent than the most envenomed spirit of nationality. The ancient patriot regarded nations that were beyond his border with indifference, or with a spirit of rivalry; but the priest declared every one who rejected his opinions to be a criminal.

From this period for many centuries Catholicism, considered as an ecclesiastical organisation, was the undisputed mistress of Europe; national feelings scarcely ever came into collision with its interests, and the whole current of affairs was directed by theology. When, however, the first breathings of the spirit of Rationalism were felt in Europe, when, under the influence of that spirit, dogmatic interests began to wane, and their paramount importance to be questioned, a new tendency was manifested. The interests of the Church were subordinated to those of the State. Theology was banished from department after department of politics, until the whole system of government was secularised.

The period in which political affairs were most completely governed by theological considerations was unquestionably the age of the Crusades. It was no political anxiety about the balance of power, but an intense religious enthusiasm, that impelled the inhabitants of Christendom towards the city which was at once the cradle and the symbol of their faith.

All interests were then absorbed, all classes were governed, all passions subdued or coloured by religious fervour. National animosities that had raged for centuries were pacified by its power. The intrigues of statesmen and the jealousies of kings disappeared beneath its influence. Nearly two millions of lives are said to have been sacrificed in the cause. Neglected governments, exhausted finances, depopulated countries were cheerfully accepted as the price of success. No wars the world had ever before seen were so popular as these, which were at the same time the most disastrous and the most unselfish.

Long before the Reformation, such wars as the Crusades had become impossible, and the relative prominence of secular policy had materially increased. This was in part the result of the better organisation of the civil government, which rendered unnecessary some of the services the Church had previously rendered to the community. Thus, when the general tolerance of private wars had produced a condition of anarchy that rendered all the relations of life insecure, the Church interposed and proclaimed in the eleventh century the 'Truce of God,' which was the first effective barrier to the lawlessness of the barons. Her bishops became the arbitrators of every quarrel, and succeeded in a great measure in calming the ferocity of the age. But when this object was in part attained, and when the regal power was consolidated, the Truce of God, in spite of many attempts to revive it,[1] fell rapidly into desuetude, and the preservation of tranquillity passed from the ec-

[1] It was confirmed as part of the general law of the Church by Alexander III. in 1179. See Ducellier, *Hist. des Classes Laborieuses en France*, pp. 87–89, 127, 128.

clesiastical to the civil government. This is but a single example of a process that was continually going on during the latter half of the middle ages. The Church had formerly exercised nearly every function of the civil government, on account of the inefficiency of the lay governors, and every development of secular administration, while it relieved the ecclesiastics of a duty, deprived them of a source of power.

But, besides the diminution of influence that resulted from this cause, the Church for many centuries found a strenuous antagonist in the regal power. The famous history of the investitures, and the equally remarkable, though less famous, ordinance by which in 1319 all bishops were expelled from the Parliament of Paris, are striking examples of the energy with which the conflict was sustained. Its issue depended mainly on the superstition of the people. In a profoundly superstitious age neither skill nor resolution could resist the effects of an excommunication or an interdict, and the most illustrious monarchs of the middle ages succumbed beneath their power. But some time before the Reformation their terror was in a great measure destroyed. The rapid growth of the industrial classes, which were at all times separated from theological tendencies, the revival of a spirit of bold and unshackled enquiry, and the discredit that had fallen upon the Church on account of the rival popes, and of the corruption of the monasteries, were the chief causes of the emancipation The Reformation was only possible when the old superstitions had been enfeebled by the spirit of doubt, and diluted by the admixture of secular interests. Kings then availed themselves gladly of

the opportunity of throwing off the restraints of the Papacy. Patriots rebelled against the supremacy of a foreign power. The lay classes welcomed a change by which the pressure of the clergy was lightened.

A comparison of the religious wars produced by the Reformation with the Crusades shows clearly the great change that had passed over the spirit of Europe. The Crusades had been purely religious. They represented solely the enthusiasm of the people for dogmatic interests, and they were maintained for more than two centuries by an effort of unexampled self-sacrifice. In the religious wars, on the other hand, the secular and the ecclesiastical elements were very evenly balanced. The object sought was political power, but difference of religious belief formed the lines of demarcation separating the hostile coalitions, and created the enthusiasm by which the struggle was maintained. The spirit of the theologian was sufficiently powerful to inundate Europe with blood, but only when united with the ambition of the politician. Yet dogmatic agreement still formed the principle of alliance, and all co-operation with heretics was deemed a sin.

This phase of opinions continued for more than a century after the Reformation. It passed away under the pressure of advancing civilisation, but not before the ministry of Richelieu; for although Francis I. had made an alliance with the Turks, and a few other sovereigns had exhibited a similar indifference to the prevailing distinctions, their policy was rarely successful. Even at the last, the change was only effected with considerable difficulty, and Italy, Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands swarmed with writ-

ings denouncing the alliance of the French with the Swedes as little short of an apostacy from Christianity. A book entitled '*Mars Gallicus*,' and published in 1635, under the pseudonym of Alexander Patricius Armacanus, was especially singled out as the most conclusive demonstration of the sinfulness of alliances with heretics, and it marks the first dawn of the reputation of one who was destined to exercise a deep and lasting influence over the fortunes of the Church. It was written by Jansenius, who owed to it his promotion to the bishopric of Ypres.[1] But the genius of Richelieu, seconded by the intellectual influences of the age, prevailed over every difficulty; and the Peace of Westphalia is justly regarded as closing the era of religious wars. The invasion of Holland by Lewis XIV. was near becoming one, and religious fanaticism has more than once lent its aid to other modern struggles;[2] but wars like those which once distracted Europe have become almost impossible. Among all the elements of affinity and repulsion that regulate the combinations of nations, dogmatic interests, which were once supreme, can scarcely be said to exist. Among all the possible dangers that cloud the horizon, none appears more improbable than a coalition formed upon the principle of a common belief, and designed to extend the sphere of its influence. Such coalitions were once the most serious occupations of statesmen. They now exist only in the speculations of the expounders of prophecy.

It was in this way that, in the course of a few cen-

[1] *Avis aux Réfugiez*, p. 56 (ed. 1692).

[2] E. g. the recent invasion of Morocco by the Spaniards. On the religious character Louis XIV. tried to give the invasion of Holland, see Michelet, *Louis XIV.*

turies, the foreign policy of all civilised nations was completely and finally secularised. Wars that were once regarded as simple duties became absolutely impossible. Alliances that were once deemed atrocious sins became habitual and unchallenged. That which had long been the centre around which all other interests revolved, receded and disappeared, and a profound change in the actions of mankind indicated a profound change in their belief.

I have already noticed the decline of that religious persecution which was long the chief sign and measure of ecclesiastical influence over the internal policy of nations. There is, however, one aspect of the Inquisition which I have not referred to, for it belongs to the subject of the present chapter—I mean its frequent hostility to the civil power.

Before the thirteenth century, the cognisance of heresy was divided between the bishop and the civil magistrate. The Church proclaimed that it was a crime more deadly than any civil offence, and that it should be punished according to its enormity; the bishop accused the heretic, and the magistrate tried and condemned him. During the earlier part of the middle ages, this arrangement, which had been that of the Theodosian Code, was accepted without difficulty. The civil government was then very submissive, and heretics almost unknown, the few cases that appeared being usually resolved into magic. When, however, at the close of the twelfth century, a spirit of rebellion against the Church had been widely diffused, the Popes perceived that some more energetic system was required, and among the measures that were devised, the principal was the Inquisition, which was intended not merely to suppress

heresy, but also to enlarge the circle of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

This new tribunal[1] was placed in the hands of the two religious orders of St. Dominick and St. Francis, and its first object was to monopolise the trials of cases of heresy. The bishop of the diocese had a certain position in the local tribunal, but it was generally little more than honorary, and was entirely subordinate to that of the chief inquisitor. The civil government was only represented by an 'Assessor,' and by some minor officers appointed by the Inquisitor himself, and its function was merely to execute those whom the ecclesiastics had condemned. A third of the confiscated goods was bestowed upon the district where the trial took place, which in its turn was to bear the expenses of the confinement of the prisoners. To crown all, the society was centralised by the appointment of an Inquisitor-General at Rome, with whom all the branches of the tribunal were to be in constant communication.

It is obvious that this organisation, in addition to its religious importance, had a very great political importance. It transferred to ecclesiastics a branch of jurisdiction which had always been regarded as belonging to the civil power, and it introduced into every country where it was acknowledged a corporation of extraordinary powers entirely dependent on a foreign potentate. The Inquisitors early found a powerful, though somewhat encroaching, friend in the Emperor Frederick II., who in 1224 issued four

[1] The relations of the Inquisition and the civil power have been admirably sketched by Sarpi, in a short work called *Discorso dell' Origine dell' Uffizio dell' Inquisitione*, which I have closely followed.

edicts at Padua, in which he declared himself their protector, commanded that all obstinate heretics should be burnt, and all penitent heretics imprisoned for life, and delegated the investigation of the crime to the ecclesiastics, though the power of pronouncing the condemnation was reserved to the secular judge. In the first half of the thirteenth century, the new tribunal was introduced into Lombardy, the Marshes, Romagna, Tuscany, the Balearic Isles, Arragon, and some of the cities of France and Germany. In Naples, however, the hostility of the king to the Pope, and the spirit of the people, resisted it. In Venice, too, the magistrates long refused to admit it, and heretics were burnt on the designation of the bishop, and by sentence of the Doge, and of the majority of the Supreme Council, until 1289, when the government yielded, and the Inquisition was introduced, though with some slight restrictions favourable to the civil power.[1] In Spain, owing to the combination of a very strong Catholic and a very strong national feeling, it assumed a somewhat peculiar form. There, as elsewhere, it was an essentially ecclesiastical institution, created, extended, and modified under the express sanction of the Pope, but the Inquisitor-General and the Chief Council were appointed by the sovereign, subject to the papal confirmation; and the famous prosecution of Antonio Perez, which resulted in the destruction of the liberties of Arragon, furnishes an example, though perhaps a solitary one, of its employment merely as a political tool.[2] At first its jurisdiction was con-

[1] Sarpi, pp. 48–57 (ed. 1639).

[2] This curious episode has been lately investigated by M. Mignet, in an interesting work called *Antonio Perez*. One of

fined to the land, and many sailors of different religions had enrolled themselves in the Spanish navy; but in 1571 Sixtus V., at the request of Philip II., appointed a special Inquisitor to preside over the navy,[1] who speedily restored its orthodoxy. By Spanish influence the tribunal was extended to the Netherlands, to the New World, to Sicily, Sardinia, and Malta.

It is said in the legend of St. Dominick that his mother, when in the season of childbirth, dreamed that a dog was about to issue from her womb, bearing a lighted torch that would kindle the whole world; and certainly the success of the Inquisition well-nigh fulfilled the portent.[2] For two or three centuries its extension was the main object of the papal policy; it was what the struggle of the investitures had been in the preceding age, the chief form which the spirit of ecclesiastical encroachment assumed; and during this long period there was probably not a single pope who did not expressly eulogise it. But although there can be no doubt that a powerful blow was thus given to heresy, it may well be questioned whether the papal policy was not, on the whole, shortsighted, for the Inquisition

the accusations brought against Perez was, that he had in a moment of passion exclaimed, that 'if God the Father had ventured to say to him what the king had said, he would have cut his nose off,' which the Inquisitors said 'partook of the heresy of the Anthropomorphites and of the Vaudois, who maintain that the Father has bodily parts.'

[1] Paramo, *De Origine Inquisitionis*, pp. 224–226. This was perhaps one of the minor causes of the decline of the Spanish navy.

[2] The Inquisition was not, it is true, organised till after his death, but St. Dominick was the chief reviver of persecution. His Order represented the principle, and the Inquisition was, almost as a matter of course, placed mainly in its hands.

probably contributed largely to the ultimate secularisation of politics. Before its institution no one doubted that the investigation and punishment of heresy formed one of the first duties of the civil government, but by the Inquisition the two things were slightly separated. The cognisance of heresy was in a measure withdrawn from the lay rulers, and by a curious inversion that very doctrine of the religious incapacity of the latter, which was afterwards urged in favour of tolerance, was at this time urged in favour of the Inquisition.[1] Nor was the new tribunal merely distinct from the civil government. It was also frequently opposed to it. Its very institution was an encroachment on the jurisdiction of the magistrate, and there were constant differences as to the exact limits of its authority. Wherever it was acknowledged it was the undisputed judge of heresy and of a large section of ecclesiastical offences, and one of these latter—the employment by priests of the confessional for the purpose of seducing the penitents—occupied a very prominent place in the writings it produced.[2] Witchcraft, too, was usually, though by no means always,

[1] The following passage from Sarpi is very instructive:—'Altre volte li santi Vescovi niuna cosa più predicavano e raccommandavano à prencipi che la cura della religione. Di niuna cosa più li ammonivano e modestamente reprendevano che del trascurarla: ed adesso niuna cosa più se predica e persuade al prencipe, se non ch' a lui non s' aspetta la cura delle cose divine, con tutto che del contrario la scrittura sacra sia piena di luoghi dove la religione è raccommandata alla protezione del prencipe della Maestà Divina.' (Pp. 89, 90.)

[2] See, for example, the full discussion of the matter in Carena, *De Officio S. Inquisitionis* (Lugduni, 1649), pp. 135–161. Three Popes—Paul IV., Pius IV., and Gregory XV.—found it necessary to issue bulls on the subject, a fact which will surprise no one who has glanced over the pages of Sanchez or Dens.

regarded as within its province, but the magistrates sometimes refused to execute its sentences. Usury was said by the ecclesiastics to be an ecclesiastical offence, but the legislators refused to allow the Inquisition to try it. Perjury, bigamy, and several other crimes gave rise to similar conflicts.

While the province of persecution was thus in some degree separated from the civil government, the extreme violence of the tribunal to which it had fallen aroused a very general popular indignation. Spain, it is true, was in this respect an exception. In that country the Inquisition was always cherished as the special expression of the national religion, and the burning of Jews and heretics was soon regarded in a double light, as a religious ceremony and also as a pageant or public amusement that was eminently congenial to the national taste.[1] In other countries,

[1] This appears sufficiently from the seasons in which executions took place, and from all the descriptions of them. I may notice, however, that there is in existence one very remarkable contemporary painting of the scene. It represents the execution, or rather the procession to the stake, of a number of Jews and Jewesses who were burnt in 1680 at Madrid, during the fêtes that followed the marriage of Charles II., and before the king, his bride, the court and clergy of Madrid. The great square was arranged like a theatre, and thronged with ladies in court dress; the king sat on an elevated platform surrounded by the chief members of the aristocracy, and Bishop Valdares, the Inquisitor-General, presided over the scene. The painter of this very remarkable picture (which is in the gallery of Madrid) was Francesco Rizzi, who died in 1685. He has directed the sympathies of the spectator against the Jews by the usual plan of exaggerating the Jewish nose—a device which is common to all early painters except Juannez, who, in his pictures of New Testament scenes, honestly gives this peculiarity of feature to the good as well as the bad characters. The picture is very curious from its representation of the attire of the condemned and of the penitent. Llorente has noticed this *auto da fé*,

however, but especially in Italy, it excited intense hostility. When the Spaniards tried to force it upon the Neapolitans, so general an insurrection ensued that even Spanish zeal recoiled from the undertaking. The north and centre of Italy writhed fiercely under the yoke. Terrific riots arising from this cause almost threatened the destruction of Milan in 1242, and of Parma in 1279, and minor disturbances took place in many other towns.[1] Although the Popes had done everything in their power to invest the office with a religious attraction—although they had granted the same indulgences to its officers as had formerly been granted to the Crusaders, and an indulgence of three years to all who, not being Inquisitors, assisted in bringing a heretic to condemnation—although, too, the sentence of excommunication was launched against all who impeded the Inquisitors in the discharge of their office—the opposition of the Italians was for centuries unextinguished. Thus we find in 1518 the district of Brescia in so wild a ferment of excitement on account of the condemnation of numerous persons on the

but not the picture. (*Hist. de l'Inquisition*, tom. iii. pp. 3, 4.)

Among the victims in 1680 was a Jewish girl, not 17, whose singular beauty struck all who saw her with admiration. As she passed to the stake, she cried to the queen, 'Great queen, is not your presence able to bring me some comfort under my misery? Consider my youth, and that I am condemned for a religion which I have sucked in with my mother's milk.' The queen turned away her eyes. (Limborch, *Hist. Inquis.* cap. xl.)

[1] Sarpi, p. 60. Gregory IX. made the admission of the Inquisition an indispensable condition of his alliances with the free towns. A monk called Friar John, of Vicenza, seems to have been the most successful in promoting the institution in Italy. He pronounced himself the apostle not of persecution, but of peace, reconciled many enemies, and burnt sixty Cathari on a single occasion in the great square of Verona. (Sismondi, *Hist. de la Liberté*, tom. i. pp. 108, 109.)

charge of incantation, that the government could with difficulty pacify it by annulling the sentences. A similar outburst took place in Mantua in 1568, and even in Rome at the death of Paul IV. the prisons of the Inquisition were burst open, and their records burnt by an infuriated crowd.[1]

All these things have their place in the history of the secularisation of politics, for they all contributed to weaken the spirit of persecution, and to separate it from the civil government. As long, however, as dogmatic interests were supreme, persecution in some form or other must have continued. How that supremacy was weakened, and how, in consequence of the decline, men ceased to burn or imprison those who differed from their opinions, the last chapter will have shown.

But, important as was this stage of the secularisation of politics, a literary censorship was still directed against heretical writings, and the system of religious disqualifications still continued. The first of these had been a very ancient practice in religious controversy. Among the pagans we find Diocletian making it one

[1] Sarpi, p. 80. Llorente, *Hist. de l'Inquisition*, tom. ii. p. 272. The Inquisition at Rome was very active in the latter half of the sixteenth century — especially during the pontificate of Pius V. In April 1570 a Capuchin named Pistoggia had an interview with the Pope, in which, speaking of the repression of heresy, he said, 'Che vedeva bene ch' ella era pronta alla giustizia, e che ogni giorno faceva impiccare e squartare ora uno, ora un altro.' (Cantù, *Eretici d'Italia*, ii. p. 410.) The most memorable victims of the Inquisition at Rome were Bruno, the pantheistic philosopher, and Aonio Paleario, the author of the justly famous treatise 'On the Benefits of Christ's Death.' Another remarkable victim was Carnesecchi, whose trial has been printed by the Rev. E. Gibbings from the original proceedings of the Inquisition, which are now in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Unfortunately the materials for this branch of the history of the Inquisition are still for the most part in MS.

of his special objects to burn the Christian writings, and Julian, without taking precisely the same step, endeavouring to attain the same end by withholding from the Christians the means of instruction that could enable them to propagate their opinions.[1] In the same way the early councils continually condemned heretical books, and the civil power, acting upon their sentence, destroyed them. Thus Constantine ordered the destruction of the writings of the Arians when the Council of Nice had condemned them. Arcadius, following the decision of the Council of Constantinople, suppressed those of Eunomius. Theodosius, after the Council of Ephesus, prohibited the works of Nestorius, and after the Council of Chalcedon those of Eutyches.[2] At first, though the condemnation belonged to the Church, the execution of the sentence was regarded as the prerogative of the civil ruler; but as early as 443 we find Pope St. Leo burning books of the Manichæans on his own authority.[3] All through the middle ages, the practice was of course continued, and the Inquisition succeeded in destroying almost the entire heretical literature before the Reformation; but at the time of the revival of learning, these measures excited some opposition. Thus, when in 1510 the theologians of Cologne, represented especially by an Inquisitor named Hocstrat, and supported by the mendicant orders and after some hesitation by the University of Paris, desired to destroy the whole literature of the

[1] Julian did not, as is sometimes said, forbid the Christians studying the classic writings, but he prohibited them from teaching them on the ground that it was absurd for those who despised and repudiated the ancient gods to expound the records of their acts. See his *Epistle to Jamblichus.*

[2] Sarpi, pp. 192, 193. Milton gives a slight sketch of the history of censorships in his *Areopagitica.*

[3] Giannone, *Ist. di Napoli.*

Jews with the exception of the Old Testament, Reuchlin, who was one of the chief Hebrew scholars of his age, protested against the measure, and having been on this account denounced in violent language by a converted Jew named Phefercorne, who had originally counselled the destruction, he rejoined in a work strongly asserting the philosophical and historical value of the Jewish literature, and urging the importance of its preservation. Nearly all the ablest pens in Germany were soon engaged on the same side; and the civil authority as well as many distinguished ecclesiastics having taken part in the controversy, it became for a time the most prominent in Europe, and resulted in the suspension of the intended measure.[1] The rise of the Reformation served, however, to increase the severity of the censorship. The system of licenses followed almost immediately upon the invention of printing, and in 1559 Paul IV. originated the Index Expurgatorius. In England, Convocation was accustomed to censure, and the Starchamber to suppress, heretical works. In Holland a love of free discussion was early generated by the fact that, during the antagonism between France and Spain, it suited the interests of the latter country to make the Netherlands the asylum of the French refugees, who were accustomed to publish there innumerable seditious writings which were directed against the French Government, but which had a very strong and favourable influence upon the country in which they appeared. When the Spanish yoke was broken, Holland became equally famous for the freedom of its religious press. With the exception of this country and of some of the cities

[1] Sleidan, liv. ii.

of Italy, there were scarcely any instances of perfect liberty of religious publications, till the Revolutions, first of all, of England, and afterwards of France, established that great principle which is rapidly becoming universal, that the judgment of theological works is altogether external to the province of legislators.

Among the earliest advocates of toleration most accepted as a truism the doctrine, that it is the duty of every nation in its national capacity to adopt some one form of religious belief, and to act upon its precepts with the consistency that is expected from an individual. This Church and State theory, which forms the last vestige of the old theocratic spirit that marks the earlier stages of civilisation, is still supreme in many countries; but in our own day it has been assailed or destroyed in all those nations that have yielded to the political tendencies of the age. Stating the theory in its most definite form, the upholders of the system of policy demanded that every nation should support and endow one form of religion and only one, that every other should be regarded as altogether outside the cognisance of the State, and that the rulers and representatives should belong exclusively to the established faith. This theory has sometimes been curtailed and modified in modern times after successive defeats, but anyone who will trace it back to the days when it was triumphant, and follow the train of argument that has been pursued by the Tory party for more than a century, can satisfy himself that I have not exaggerated its purport.

The two European nations which represent most fully in their policy the intellectual tendencies of the

age are unquestionably France and England, and it is precisely in these nations that the theory has been successfully assailed. After several slight oscillations, the French people in 1830 finally proclaimed, as a basis of their constitution, the principle, that no state religion is recognised by France; and as a comment upon this decision we have seen a Protestant holding the reins of power under Louis Philippe, and a Jew sitting in the Provisional Government of 1848. A more complete abnegation of the old doctrine it would be impossible to conceive, and it places France, in at least this respect, at the head of modern liberalism.[1]

The progress of the movement in England has been much more gradual, and it represents the steady growth of rationalistic principles among statesmen. The first great step was taken during the depression of the clergy that followed the Revolution. The establishment of the Scotch Kirk, whether we consider the principle it involved or the vast amount of persecution it terminated, was undoubtedly one of the most signal defeats the English Church has ever undergone. For a considerable time, however, the clergy succeeded in arresting the movement, which at last received a fresh propulsion by the Irish Parliament, and attained its full triumph under the exigencies of Irish policy.

Whatever may be thought of the purity of the Irish Parliament during the brief period in which it exercised an independent authority, there are certainly

[1] For a clear view of the successive stages of the secularising movement in France, see the memorial on the subject drawn up by the Abbé Lacordaire, and reproduced by Lamennais. (*Affaires de Rome*, pp. 37–89.)

few things more absurd than the charges of bigotry that are frequently directed against it. If we measure it by the standard of the present day, it will of course appear very defective, but if we compare it with contemporary legislatures, and above all if we estimate the peculiar temptations to which it was exposed, our verdict would be very different. It would be scarcely possible to conceive a legislature with greater inducement to adopt a sectarian policy. Before 1793 it was elected exclusively by Protestants. The government had created, and most sedulously maintained, that close borough system which has always a tendency to make private interest the guiding motive of policy; and the extraordinary monopoly the Protestants possessed of almost all positions of wealth and dignity, rendered the strictest toryism their obvious interest. There was scarcely any public opinion existing in Ireland, and the Catholics were so torpid through continued oppression, that they could exercise scarcely any influence upon legislation. Under these circumstances the Irish Parliament, having admitted them to the magistracy, to the jury box, and to several minor privileges, at last accorded them the elective franchise, which, in a country where they formed an immense majority of the nation, and where every reform of Parliament and every extension of education must have strengthened their interest, necessarily implied a complete emancipation. It is worthy, too, of notice that the liberalism of the Irish Parliament was always in direct proportion to its political independence. It was when the events of the American war had infused into it that strong national feeling which produced the declaration of independence in 1782, that the tendency towards

toleration became manifest. Almost all those great orators who cast a halo of such immortal eloquence around its closing period, were the advocates of emancipation. Almost all who were the enemies of its legislative independence, were the enemies of toleration.

The Irish Parliament was, in truth, a body governed very constantly by corrupt motives, though probably not more so than the English Parliament in the time of Walpole. It was also distinguished by a recklessness of tone and policy that was all the more remarkable on account of the unusually large measure of genius it produced; but it was during the period of its independence probably more free from religious bigotry than any other representative body that had ever sat in the United Kingdom. That it would have completed the measure of 1793 by the admission of Catholics to Parliament, if the Government had supported or had even refrained from opposing that measure, is almost absolutely certain. The opposition of the ministers threw out the bill, and the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam damped the hopes of the Catholics, and was one of the chief proximate causes of the Rebellion of 1798. But although emancipation was not then conceded, the Irish Parliament directed a deadly blow against the Tory theory, by endowing the College of Maynooth, a distinctively Catholic institution designed for the education of the Catholic priesthood.[1]

[1] I may here notice that an Irishman and an ecclesiastic—Bishop Berkeley—was, as far as I know, the first Protestant who suggested the admission of Catholics into a Protestant university. He proposed that they should be admitted into that of Dublin without being compelled to attend chapel or any divinity lectures; and he observed that the Jesuits in

The Union was, on the whole, very unfavourable to the movement. To exclude the Catholics from the Parliament of an empire in which they were a small minority did not appear such a glaring anomaly as to exclude them from the Parliament of a nation of which they formed the great majority. The national feeling that made the Irish Protestants wish to emancipate their fellow-countrymen could not act with the same force on an English Parliament; and the evangelical movement which had originated with Wesley, and which was in general strongly adverse to the Catholic claims, had in a great measure pervaded English society, before it became ascendent in Ireland. Besides this, a profound change had passed over public opinion in Ireland. The purely national and secular spirit the Irish Parliament had fostered perished with its organ. Patriotism was replaced by sectarianism, and the evil continued till it made Ireland one of the most priest-

their colleges in Paris, had acted in this manner towards Protestants. (*Querist*, No. 291, published in 1735.) As early as 1725 a considerable amount of controversy took place on the subject of toleration in Ireland, occasioned by a sermon preached before the Irish Parliament by a clergyman named Synge, in which he advocated as a Christian duty the most complete toleration of the Catholics, and enunciated the principles of religious liberty with the strongest emphasis. The Parliament ordered the sermon to be published. It was answered by a writer named Radcliffe, and defended by a writer named Weaver. Synge himself rejoined. This whole controversy, which is utterly forgotten —buried in the great chaos of Irish pamphlets, and perhaps read of late years by no human being except the present writer —is well worthy of the attention of those who study the course of public opinion in Ireland. Perhaps the most eloquent defence of toleration written in English during the last century, was the answer of the Irish priest O'Leary to Wesley's Defence of the Penal laws; but then O'Leary was defending his own cause.

ridden nations in Europe. These causes account sufficiently for the delay of more than a quarter of a century in according the boon which in 1796 appeared almost attained. On the other hand the Whig party, which had constituted itself the representative of the secular movement, and which contained an unusually large proportion of religious latitudinarians,[1] steadily advanced, and its organ, the *Edinburgh Review*, was for some years one of the most powerful intellectual influences in England. At the same time the agitation of O'Connell gave a new and imperative tone to the demands of the Catholics, and O'Connell very judiciously maintained the claims of the dissenters as strongly as those of his coreligionists. At last the victory was achieved. By the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts the theory of Church and State that had so long been maintained was broken. Still stage after stage of the emancipation was fiercely contested. The Catholics were avowedly admitted through fear of a revolution, and the act was performed in such a grudging and ungracious manner as to destroy all the gratitude, and many of the benefits, it would otherwise have conferred. Even then many years elapsed before the Jews were emancipated. The invasion and partial destruction of the sectarian character of the universities represents the last stage of the movement which the earliest advocates of toleration had begun.

A necessary consequence of this movement was that the clergy were, as a body, identified either with retrogression or with immobility in politics. During the middle ages they had been the initiators

[1] See on this subject, a striking letter by Southey, in Blanco White's Life, vol. i. p. 310.

of almost every progressive movement; but in modern times, the current being directly opposed to their interests, they have naturally become the champions of the past. At the same time, and as a result of the same causes, their political influence has been steadily declining. In England the first great blow to their power was the destruction of the monasteries. Fuller has reckoned at twenty-seven, Lord Herbert at twenty-eight, and Sir Edward Coke at twenty-nine, the number of mitred abbots and priors who by this measure lost their seats in the House of Lords.[1] In the reign of Henry III. the spiritual peers had formed one-half of the upper house; in the beginning of the eighteenth century they formed only one-eighth, and in the middle of the nineteenth century only one-fourteenth.[2] Since the beginning of the eighteenth century no clergyman has occupied any important office in the state,[3] and the same change has passed over almost every other nation in Europe.

To those who have appreciated the great truth that a radical political change necessarily implies a corresponding change in the mental habits of society, the process which I have traced will furnish a decisive evidence of the declining influence of dogmatic theology. That vast department of thought and action which is comprised under the name of politics was once altogether guided by its power. It is now passing from its influence rapidly, universally, and completely. The classes that are most penetrated with the spirit of special dogmas were once the chief

[1] Joyce, *Hist. of English Convocations*, p. 449.
[2] Buckle, *Hist. of Civ.* vol. i. pp. 380, 381.
[3] Ibid.

directors of the policy of Europe. They now form a baffled and desponding minority, whose most cherished political principles have been almost universally abandoned, who are struggling faintly and ineffectually against the ever-increasing spirit of the age, and whose ideal is not in the future but in the past. It is evident that a government never can be really like a railway company, or a literary society, which only exercises an influence over secular affairs. As long as it determines the system of education that exists among its subjects, as long as it can encourage or repress the teaching of particular doctrines, as long as its foreign policy brings it into collision with governments which still make the maintenance of certain religious systems a main object of their policy, it will necessarily exercise a gigantic influence upon belief. It cannot possibly be uninfluential, and it is difficult to assign limits to the influence that it may exercise. If the men who compose it (or the public opinion that governs them) be pervaded by an intensely-realised conviction that the promulgation of a certain system of doctrine is incomparably the highest of human interests, that to assist that promulgation is the main object for which they were placed in the world, and should be the dominant motive of their lives, it will be quite impossible for these men, as politicians, to avoid interfering with theology. Men who are inspired by an absorbing passion will inevitably gratify it if they have the power. Men who sincerely desire the happiness of mankind will certainly use to the uttermost the means they possess of promoting what they feel to be beyond all comparison the greatest of human interests. If by giving a certain direction to

education they could avert fearful and general physical suffering, there can be no doubt that they would avail themselves of their power. If they were quite certain that the greatest possible suffering was the consequence of deviating from a particular class of opinions, they could not possibly neglect that consideration in their laws. This is the conclusion we should naturally draw from the nature of the human mind, and it is most abundantly corroborated by experience.[1] In order to ascertain the tendencies of certain opinions, we should not confine ourselves to those exceptional intellects who, having perceived the character of their age, have spent their lives in endeavouring painfully and laboriously to wrest their opinions in conformity with it. We should rather observe the position which large bodies of men, governed by the same principles, but living under various circumstances and in different ages, naturally and almost unconsciously occupy. We have ample means of judging in the present case. We see the general tone which is adopted on political subjects by the clergy of the most various creeds, by the religious newspapers, and by the politicians who represent that section of the community which is most occupied with dogmatic theology. We see that it is a tendency distinct from and opposed to the tendencies of the age. History tells us that it was

[1] This has been very clearly noticed in one of the ablest modern books in defence of the Tory theory. 'At the point where Protestantism becomes vicious, where it receives the first tinge of latitudinarianism, and begins to join hands with infidelity by superseding the belief of an objective truth in religion, necessary for salvation; at that very spot it likewise assumes an aspect of hostility to the union of Church and State.' (Gladstone, on *Church and State*, p. 188.)

once dominant in politics, that it has been continuously and rapidly declining, and that it has declined most rapidly and most steadily in those countries in which the developement of intellect has been most active. All over Europe the priesthood are now associated with a policy of toryism, of reaction, or of obstruction. All over Europe the organs that represent dogmatic interests are in permanent opposition to the progressive tendencies around them, and are rapidly sinking into contempt. In every country in which a strong political life is manifested, the secularisation of politics is the consequence. Each stage of that movement has been initiated and effected by those who are most indifferent to dogmatic theology, and each has been opposed by those who are most occupied with theology.[1]

And as I write these words, it is impossible to forget that one of the great problems on which the thoughts of politicians are even now concentrated is the hopeless decadence of the one theocracy of modern Europe, of the great type and representative of the alliance of politics and theology. That throne on which it seemed as though the changeless Church had

[1] The evidence of the secularisation of politics furnished by the position of what is called 'the religious press,' is not confined to England and France. The following very remarkable passage was written by a most competent observer in 1858, when Austria seemed the centre of religious despotism: 'Tous les intérêts les plus chétifs ont de nombreux organes dans la presse périodique et font tous de bonnes affaires. La religion, le premier et le plus grand de tous les intérêts, n'en a qu'un nombre presque imperceptible et qui a bien de la peine à vivre. Dans la catholique Autriche, sur 135 journaux il n'y a qu'un seul consacré aux intérêts du christianisme, et il laisse beaucoup à désirer sous le rapport de l'orthodoxie . . . la vérité est que décidément l'opinion publique ainsi que l'intérêt public ont cessé d'être chrétiens en Europe.' (Ventura, *Le Pouvoir chrétien politique*, p. 139.)

stamped the impress of her own perpetuity—that throne which for so many centuries of anarchy and confusion had been the Sinai of a protecting and an avenging law—that throne which was once the centre and the archetype of the political system of Europe, the successor of Imperial Rome, the inheritor of a double portion of her spirit, the one power which seemed removed above all the vicissitudes of politics, the iris above the cataract, unshaken amid so much turmoil and so much change—that throne has in our day sunk into a condition of hopeless decrepitude, and has only prolonged its existence by the confession of its impotence. Supported by the bayonets of a foreign power, and avowedly incapable of self-existence, it is no longer a living organism, its significance is but the significance of death. There was a time when the voice that issued from the Vatican shook Europe to its foundations, and sent forth the proudest armies to the deserts of Syria. There was a time when all the valour and all the chivalry of Christendom would have followed the banner of the Church in any field and against any foe. Now a few hundred French, and Belgians, and Irish are all who would respond to its appeal. Its august antiquity, the reverence that centres around its chief, the memory of the unrivalled influence it has exercised, the genius that has consecrated its past, the undoubted virtues that have been displayed by its rulers, were all unable to save the papal government from a decadence the most irretrievable and the most hopeless. Reforms were boldly initiated, but they only served to accelerate its ruin. A repressive policy was attempted, but it could not arrest the progress of its decay. For nearly a century, under every

ruler and under every system of policy, it has been hopelessly, steadily, and rapidly declining. At last the influences that had so long been corroding it attained their triumph. It fell before the Revolution and has since been unable to exist, except by the support of a foreign army. The principle of its vitality has departed.

No human pen can write its epitaph, for no imagination can adequately realise its glories. In the eyes of those who estimate the greatness of a sovereignty, not by the extent of its territory, or by the valour of its soldiers, but by the influence which it has exercised over mankind, the papal government has had no rival, and can have no successor. But though we may not fully estimate the majesty of its past, we can at least trace the causes of its decline. It fell because it neglected the great truth that a government to be successful must adapt itself to the ever-changing mental condition of society, that a policy which in one century produces the utmost prosperity, in another leads only to ruin and to disaster. It fell because it represented the union of politics and theology, and because the intellect of Europe has rendered it an anachronism by pronouncing their divorce. It fell because its constitution was essentially and radically opposed to the spirit of an age in which the secularisation of politics is the measure and the condition of all political prosperity.

The secularisation of politics is, as we have seen, the direct consequence of the declining influence of dogmatic theology. I have said that it also reacts upon and influences its cause. The creation of a strong and purely secular political feeling diffused

through all classes of society, and producing an ardent patriotism, and a passionate and indomitable love of liberty, is sufficient in many respects to modify all the great departments of thought, and to contribute largely to the formation of a distinct type of intellectual character.

It is obvious, in the first place, that one important effect of a purely secular political feeling will be to weaken the intensity of sectarianism. Before its existence sectarianism was the measure by which all things and persons were contemplated. It exercised an undivided control over the minds and passions of men, absorbed all their interests, and presided over all their combinations. But when a purely political spirit is engendered, a new enthusiasm is introduced into the mind, which first divides the affections and at last replaces the passion that had formerly been supreme. Two different enthusiasms, each of which makes men regard events in a special point of view, cannot at the same time be absolute. The habits of thought that are formed by the one, will necessarily weaken or efface the habits of thought that are formed by the other. Men learn to classify their fellows by a new principle. They become in one capacity the cordial associates of those whom in another capacity they had long regarded with unmingled dislike. They learn to repress and oppose in one capacity those whom in another capacity they regard with unbounded reverence. Conflicting feelings are thus produced which neutralise each other; and if one of the two increases, the other is proportionately diminished. Every war that unites for secular objects nations of different creeds, every measure that extends political interests to classes that had formerly been excluded

from their range, has therefore a tendency to assuage the virulence of sects.

Another consequence of the intellectual influence of political life is a tendency to sacrifice general principles to practical results. It has often been remarked that the English constitution, which is commonly regarded as the most perfect realisation of political freedom, is beyond all others the most illogical, and that a very large proportion of those measures which have proved most beneficial, have involved the grossest logical inconsistencies, the most partial and unequal applications of some general principle. The object of the politician is expediency, and his duty is to adapt his measures to the often crude, undeveloped, and vacillating conceptions of the nation. The object, on the other hand, of the philosopher is truth, and his duty is to push every principle which he believes to be true to its legitimate consequences regardless of the results which may follow. Nothing can be more fatal in politics than a preponderance of the philosophical; or in philosophy, than a preponderance of the political spirit. In the first case, the ruler will find himself totally incapable of adapting his measures to the exigencies of exceptional circumstances; he will become involved in inextricable difficulties by the complexity of the phenomena he endeavours to reduce to order; and he will be in perpetual collision with public opinion. In the second case, the thinker will be continually harassed by considerations of expediency which introduce the bias of the will into what should be a purely intellectual process, and impart a timidity and a disingenuousness to the whole tone of his thoughts. There can, I think, be little doubt that this latter influence is at

present acting most unfavourably upon speculative opinions in countries where political life is very powerful. A disinterested love of truth can hardly coexist with a strong political spirit. In all countries where the habits of thought have been mainly formed by political life, we may discover a disposition to make expediency the test of truth, to close the eyes and turn away the mind from any arguments that tend towards a radical change, and above all to make utilitarianism a kind of mental perspective according to which the different parts of belief are magnified or diminished. All that has a direct influence upon the wellbeing of society is brought into clear relief; all that has only an intellectual importance becomes unrealised and inoperative. It is probable that the capacity for pursuing abstract truth for its own sake, which has given German thinkers so great an ascendency in Europe, is in no slight degree to be attributed to the political languor of their nation.

This predisposition acts in different ways upon the progress of Rationalism. It is hostile to it on account of the intense conservatism it produces, and also on account of its opposition to that purely philosophical spirit to which Rationalism seeks to subordinate all departments of speculative belief. It is favourable to it, inasmuch as it withdraws the minds of men from the doctrinal aspect of their faith to concentrate them upon the moral aspect, which in the eyes of the politician as of the rationalist is infinitely the most important.

But probably the most important, and certainly the most beneficial, effect of political life is to habituate men to a true method of enquiry. Government in a constitutional country is carried on by debate, all

the arguments on both sides are brought forward with unrestricted freedom, and every newspaper reports in full what has been said against the principles it advocates by the ablest men in the country. Men may study the debates of Parliament under the influence of a strong party bias, they may even pay more attention to the statements of one party than to those of the other, but they never imagine that they can form an opinion by an exclusive study of what has been written on one side. The two views of every question are placed in juxtaposition, and everyone who is interested in the subject examines both. When a charge is brought against any politician men naturally turn to his reply before forming an opinion, and they feel that any other course would be not only extremely foolish but also extremely dishonest. This is the spirit of truth as opposed to the spirit of falsehood and imposture, which in all ages and in all departments of thought has discouraged men from studying opposing systems, lamented the circulation of adverse arguments, and denounced as criminal those who listen to them. Among the higher order of intellects the first spirit is chiefly cultivated by those philosophical studies which discipline and strengthen the mind for research. But what philosophy does for a very few political life does, less perfectly indeed but still in a great degree, for the many. It diffuses abroad not only habits of acute reasoning, but also, what is far more important, habits of impartiality and intellectual fairness, which will at last be carried into all forms of discussion, and will destroy every system that refuses to accept them. Year after year, as political life extends, we find each new attempt to stifle the expression of opinion received with

an increased indignation, the sympathies of the people immediately enlisted on behalf of the oppressed teacher, and the work which is the object of condemnation elevated in public esteem often to a degree that is far greater than it deserves. Year after year the conviction becomes more general that a provisional abnegation of the opinions of the past and a resolute and unflinching impartiality are among the highest duties of the enquirer, and that he who shrinks from such a research is at least morally bound to abstain from condemning the opinions of his neighbour.

If we may generalise the experience of modern constitutional governments, it would appear that this process must pass through three phases. When political life is introduced into a nation that is strongly imbued with sectarianism, this latter spirit will at first dominate over political interests, and the whole scope and tendency of government will be directed by theology. After a time the movement I have traced in the present chapter will appear. The secular element will emerge into light. It will at length obtain an absolute ascendency, and, expelling theology successively from all its political strongholds, will thus weaken its influence over the human mind. Yet in one remarkable way the spirit of sectarianism will still survive: it will change its name and object, transmigrate into political discussion, and assume the form of an intense party-spirit. The increasing tendency, however, of political life seems to be to weaken or efface this spirit, and in the more advanced stages of free government it almost disappears. A judicial spirit is fostered which leads men both in politics and theology to eclecticism, to

judge all questions exclusively on the ground of their intrinsic merits, and not at all according to their position in theological or political systems. To increase the range and intensity of political interests is to strengthen this tendency; and every extension of the suffrage thus diffuses over a wider circle a habit of thought that must eventually modify theological belief. If the suffrage should ever be granted to women, it would probably, after two or three generations, effect a complete revolution in their habits of thought, which by acting upon the first period of education would influence the whole course of opinion.

Such then have been some of the leading tendencies produced by that purely secular political spirit which is itself a result of the declining influence of theology. It now remains for us to examine the second branch of our subject—the secularisation of the basis or principle of authority upon which all political structures rest.

In the course of the last few years a great many insurrections of nations against their sovereigns have taken place, which have been regarded with warm approval by the public opinion of the most advanced nations in Europe. Some countries have cast off their rulers in order by coalescing to form one powerful State, others because those rulers were tyrannical or incapable, others because the system of their government had grown antiquated, and others in order to realise some historical nationality. In many cases the deposed rulers had been bound to their people by no distinct stipulations, had violated no law, and had been guilty of no extraordinary harshness. The simple ground upon which these changes were justified was that the great majority of the nation desired

them, and that ground has generally been acquiesced in as sufficient. To exhibit in the plainest form the change that has come over public opinion it may be sufficient to say that for many centuries all such insurrections would have been regarded by theologians as mortal sins, and all who participated in them as in danger of perdition.

The teaching of the Early Fathers on the subject is perfectly unanimous and unequivocal. Without a single exception, all who touched upon the subject pronounced active resistance to the established authorities to be under all circumstances sinful. If the law enjoined what was wrong it should be disobeyed, but no vice and no tyranny could justify revolt.[1] This doctrine was taught in the most emphatic terms, not as a counsel of expediency applicable to special circumstances, but as a moral principle universally binding upon the conscience. It was taught in the midst of the most horrible persecutions. It was taught when the Christians were already extremely numerous, and their forbearance, notwithstanding their numbers, was constantly claimed as a merit.[2] So harmonious and so emphatic are the Patristic testimonies upon the subject, that the later theologians who adopted other views have been utterly unable to adduce any passages in their support, and have been

[1] See Grotius, *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, lib. i. cap. 4; Taylor, *Ductor Dubitantium*, lib. iii. cap. 3, and also the list of authorities cited by Gregory XVI. in his bull to the Bishops of Poland, 'concerning the maxims of the Catholic Church on submission to the civil power'; Lamennais, *Affaires de Rome*, pp. 308–317. But perhaps the fullest exposition of the Patristic sentiments on the subject is in a very able book called *Sacro-Sancta Regum Majestas*, published at Oxford at the beginning of the Great Rebellion.

[2] Striking instances of this are given by Grotius, *De Jure*, lib. i. c. iv. § 7.

reduced to the melancholy expedient of virtually accusing the Early Christians of hypocrisy, by maintaining that, notwithstanding the high moral tone they assumed on the subject, the real cause of their submission was their impotence,[1] or to the ludicrous expedient of basing a system of liberal politics on the invectives of Cyril and Gregory Nazianzen against the memory of Julian.[2]

It is manifest that such a doctrine is absolutely incompatible with political liberty. 'A limited monarch,' as even the Tory Hume admitted, 'who is not to be resisted when he exceeds his limitations is a contradiction in terms.' Besides, in almost every case, the transition from an absolute to a limited monarchy has been the result of the resistance of the people, and the whole course of history abundantly proves that power, when once enjoyed, is scarcely ever voluntarily relinquished. From these considerations Grotius and many other writers have concluded that a Christian people, when oppressed by tyrants,

[1] This has been maintained among others by Milton and Gronovius among the Protestants, and by Bellarmine and (in more modern times) by Bianchi among the Catholics. See Bianchi, *Traité de la Puissance ecclésiastique* (trad. Peltier, Paris, 1857), tom. i. pp. 639–642.

[2] This appears to have been a favourite argument of the French Protestants: *Avis aux Réfugiez sur leur prochain Retour en France*, p. 43. To these the Gallican Catholics replied that Julian was dead when the invectives were delivered. Hilary, however, inveighed vehemently against the Arian Emperor Constantius, in the lifetime of the latter; and Bianchi, in a very ingenious fashion, argues from this that Constantius must have been virtually deposed on account of his heresy, for respect to lawful sovereigns is among the plainest duties; and as St. Hilary called Constantius 'a precursor of Antichrist,' 'a rascal,' and 'an object of malediction,' &c. &c., it may be inferred that he did not regard him as his lawful sovereign. (*Puissance eccl.*, tom. i. pp. 651, 652.)

is bound to sacrifice its hopes of liberty to its faith, while Shaftesbury and his followers have denounced Christianity as incompatible with freedom. But to those who regard the history of the Church not as one homogeneous whole but as a series of distinct phases, the attitude of its early leaders will appear very different. For the first condition of liberty is the establishment of some higher principle of action than fear. A government that rests on material force alone must always be a tyranny, whatever may be the form it assumes, and at the time Christianity became supreme the Roman Empire was rapidly degenerating into that frightful condition. Increasing corruption had destroyed both the tie of religion and the tie of patriotism, and the army was the sole arbiter of the destinies of the State. After a time the invasion of the barbarians still further aggravated the situation. Hordes of savages, fresh from a life of unbounded freedom, half-frenzied by the sudden acquisition of immense wealth, and belonging to many different tribes, were struggling fiercely for the mastery. Society was almost resolved into its primitive elements; force had become the one measure of dignity. Alone amid these discordant interests the Christians taught by their precepts and their example the obligation of a moral law, and habituated men to that respect for authority and that exercise of self-restraint which form the basis of every lasting political structure. Had they followed the example of others they might probably have more than once saved themselves from frightful persecutions, and might possibly have acquired an ascendency some time before the accession of Constantine. But, guided by a far nobler instinct, they

chose instead to constitute themselves the champions of legality, they irradiated submission with a purer heroism than has ever glowed around the conqueror's path, and they kept alive the sacred flame at a time when it had almost vanished from the earth. We may say that they exaggerated their principle, but such exaggeration was probably essential to its efficacy. The temptations to anarchy and insubordination were so great that had the doctrine of submission been stated with any qualifications, had it been stated in any but the most emphatic language, it would have proved inoperative. Indeed, what cause for resistance could possibly have been more just than the persecutions of a Nero or a Diocletian? Yet it was in the reign of Nero that St. Paul inculcated in unequivocal language the doctrine of passive obedience, and it was the boast of Tertullian and other of the Fathers, that at a time when Rome was swarming with Christians, the most horrible persecutions were endured without a murmur or a struggle. Such conduct, if adopted as a binding precedent, would arrest the whole progress of society, but considered in its own place in history, it is difficult to overvalue it.

Besides this, it should be remembered that the Early Church had adopted a system of government that was based upon the most democratic principles. It can be no exaggeration to say, that if the practice of electing bishops by universal suffrage had continued, the habits of freedom would have been so diffused among the people, that the changes our own age has witnessed might have been anticipated by many centuries, and might have been effected under the direct patronage of Catholicism. This,

however, was not to be. The system of episcopal election was far in advance of the age, and the disorders it produced were so great that it was soon found necessary to abolish it. At the same time many circumstances pointed out the Roman See as the natural centre of a new form of organisation. The position Rome occupied in the world, the increasing authority of the bishop resulting from the transfer of the civil ruler to Constantinople, the admirable administrative and organising genius the Roman ecclesiastics had inherited from the Empire, their sustained ambition, the splendour cast upon the see by the genius and virtues of St. Gregory and St. Leo, the conversion of the barbarians, the destruction of the rival sees of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, and the Greek schism—all tended to revive in another form the empire Rome had so long exercised over the destinies of mankind.

When the Papal power was fully organised, and during the whole of the period that elapsed between that time and the Reformation, the rights of nations against their sovereigns may be said to have been almost unnoticed. The great question concerning the principle of authority lay in the conflicting claims of temporal sovereigns and of popes. Although the power the latter claimed and often exercised over the former has produced some of the most fearful calamities, although we owe to it in a great degree the Crusades and religious persecution, and many of the worst features of the semi-religious struggles that convulsed Italy during the middle ages, there can be no question that it was on the whole favourable to liberty. The simple fact that nations acknowledged two different masters was

itself a barrier to despotism, and the Church had always to appeal to the subjects of a sovereign to enforce its decisions against him. There was therefore a certain bias among ecclesiastics in favour of the people, and it must be added that the mediæval popes almost always belonged to a far higher grade of civilisation than their opponents. Whatever may have been their faults, they represented the cause of moral restraint, of intelligence, and of humanity in an age of physical force, ignorance, and barbarity.

It is not necessary to follow in detail the history of the encroachments of the spiritual upon the civil power, or to enter into the interminable controversies about the power of deposition. Such topics are only connected indirectly with the subject of the present chapter, and they have been treated with great ability by several well-known writers.[1] There are, however, two points connected with them to which it may be advisable to refer. In the first place, in judging the question as to the right of the Pope to depose sovereigns, it is evident that the advantage must have always remained with the former, in an age in which he was himself regarded as the final arbiter of moral questions. Every conclusion

[1] A clear secular view of the subject is given by Mr. Hallam, in the chapter on the 'Increase of Ecclesiastical Authority,' in his *Hist. of the Middle Ages*. It has also been examined very fully by Bossuet, from a Gallican point of view, in his *Defence of the Articles of the Gallican Church*, and from an ultramontane point of view by Bianchi, *On Ecclesiastical Power*. This last book, which is a work of exceedingly extensive learning but of undisguised and indeed dishonest partiality, was published originally in Italian in 1745, and directed especially against the opinions of Giannone. The French translation was made in 1857, and consists of two (in every sense of the word) most ponderous volumes. It is now the great standard work of the ultramontane party.

was then arrived at not by way of reasoning but by way of authority, and, with the very doubtful exception of general councils, there was no higher authority than the Pope. General councils too were rare occurrences; they could only be convened by the Pope, and in the majority of cases they were the creatures of his will. When a bull of excommunication had been launched, the sovereign against whom it was directed might indeed assemble a council of the bishops of his own people, and they might condemn the excommunication, but, however strong might be their arguments, their authority was necessarily inferior to that which was opposed to them. They might appeal to the declarations of the Fathers, but the right of interpreting those declarations rested with the Church of which the Pope was, in fact, the authoritative representative. Nor had he any difficulty in this respect. If it was said that the early bishops enjoined absolute submission to the pagan persecutors, it was answered that this was an irrelevant argument, for the Church only claimed the power of deposing those who by baptism were placed under her dominion. If it was rejoined that the same submission was shown under Constantius or Valens or Julian, the reply was that the weakness of the Christians was the cause of their resignation, and that the fact of the Church possessing the power of excommunication did not at all imply that she was bound on every legitimate occasion to exercise it. If, in fine, the passages in which the Fathers dilated upon the sinfulness of all rebellion against the sovereign were adduced, it was answered that the Pope exhorted no one to such rebellion, for by the sentence of deposition the sovereign had been de-

prived of his sovereignty.[1] In this way the Patristic utterances were easily evaded, and the ecclesiastical authority of the Pope made it almost a heresy to question his claims.

In the next place it should be observed that this doctrine of deposition was not so much an isolated assumption on the part of the Popes as a logical and necessary inference from other parts of the teaching of the Church. The point on which the controversies between Catholics on this subject have chiefly turned is the right of the Popes to condemn any notorious criminal to public penance, a sentence which involved the deprivation of all civil functions, and therefore in the case of a sovereign amounted to deposition.[2] But whether or not this right was always acknowledged in the Church, there can be little doubt that the power which was generally conceded to the ecclesiastical authorities of relaxing or annulling the obligation of an oath necessarily led to their political ascendency, for it is not easy to see how those who acknowledged the existence of this power could make an exception in favour of the oath of allegiance.

When the rise of the scholastic philosophy had introduced into Christendom a general passion for minute definitions, and for the organisation and elaboration of all departments of theology, the attitude of hostility the Church had for some time ex-

[1] As one of the leading supporters of the Papal party put it with amusing coolness: 'Certe licet Paulus dixerit "omnis anima potestatibus sublimioribus subdita sit" nunquam addidit, etiam potestatibus excommunicatis, vel deprivatis a papa.' (Suarez, *De Fide*, lib. vi. cap. 4.)

[2] Bianchi, *Puissance ecclésiastique*, tom. i. pp. 550–571. Louis le Débonnaire seems to have been deposed in this way.

hibited towards the civil power was more or less reflected in the writings that were produced. St. Thomas Aquinas indeed, the ablest of all these theologians, distinctly asserts the right of subjects to withhold their obedience from rulers who were usurpers or unjust;[1] but this opinion, which was probably in advance of the age, does not appear to have been generally adopted, or at least generally promulgated. The right of popes to depose princes who had fallen into heresy was, however, at this time constantly asserted.[2] To the schoolmen too we chiefly owe the definition of the doctrine of the mediate character of the Divine Right of Kings, which is very remarkable in the history of opinions as the embryo of the principles of Locke and Rousseau. It was universally admitted that both popes and kings derived their authority from the Deity, and from this fact the royal advocates inferred that a pope had no more power to depose a king than a king to depose a pope. But, according to some of the schoolmen, there was this distinction between the cases: a pope was directly and immediately the representative of the Almighty, but a king derived his power directly from the people. Authority, considered in the abstract, is of Divine

[1] 'Principibus sæcularibus in tantum homo obedire tenetur in quantum ordo justitiæ requirit. Et ideo si non habeant justum principatum sed usurpatum, vel si injusta præcipiant, non tenentur eis subditi obedire, nisi forte per accidens propter vitandum scandalum vel periculum.' (*Summa*, Pars II. Quæst. civ. art. 6.)

[2] Bossuet simply remarks that for some centuries after St. Thomas the schoolmen seem to have been nearly unanimous on this point, but that it is manifest that they were mistaken! (See Bianchi, tom. i. pp. 135, 136.) The writer among the schoolmen who was most favourable to liberty was the Englishman William of Okham. Milman, *Hist. of Latin Christianity*, vol. vi. pp. 470–474.)

origin; and when the people had raised a particular family to the throne, the sanction of the Deity rested upon its members, but still the direct and immediate source of regal power was the nation.[1] Although this doctrine was not asserted in the popular but in the Papal interest, and although it was generally held that the people having transferred their original authority to the sovereign were incapable of recalling it, except perhaps in such extreme cases as when a sovereign had sought to betray to a foreign power the country he ruled, it is not the less certain that we have here the first link of a chain of principles that terminated in the French Revolution.

After all, however, it is rather a matter of curiosity than of importance to trace among the vast mass of speculations bequeathed to us by the schoolmen the faint outlines of a growing liberalism. Whatever may have been the opinions of a few monkish speculators, however splendid may have been the achievements of a few industrial half-sceptical republics,[2] it was not till the Reformation that the rights of

[1] Suarez, *De Fide*, lib. iii. cap. 2; Bianchi, ch. i. These theologians of course endeavour to trace back their distinction to the origin of Christianity, but its formal definition and systematic enforcement are due mainly to the schoolmen.

[2] The political influence of the Italian republics upon English public opinion was very powerful in the seventeenth century, when the habit of travelling became general among the upper class of Englishmen, and when a large proportion of the highest intellects acquired in Italy a knowledge of the Italian writers on government, and an admiration for the Italian constitutions, and especially for that of Venice. The highest representative of this action of the Italian upon the English intellect was Harrington. His *Oceana*, though published under the Commonwealth and dedicated to Cromwell, was altogether uninfluenced by the inspiration of Puritanism; and it was only by the intercession of Cromwell's favourite

rationalities became a great question in Europe. The spirit of insubordination created by the struggle, and the numerous important questions which Protestantism submitted to the adjudication of the multitude, predisposed the people to enlarge the limits of their power; while the countless sects that were appealing to popular favour, and the frequent opposition of belief between the governors and the governed, ensured a full discussion of the subject. The result of this was the creation of a great variety of opinions, the views of each sect being determined mainly by its circumstances, or, in other words, by the predisposition resulting from its interests.

If we begin our review with the Ultramontane party in the Church of Rome, which especially represented the opinions of the Popes, we find that it was confronted with two great facts. In the first place, a multitude of sovereigns had embraced Pro-

daughter, Lady Claypole, that its publication was permitted. (Toland, *Life of Harrington.*) It is remarkable that while Harrington's writings were avowedly based in a very great degree upon those of Italians, they also represent more faithfully than any others of the seventeenth century what are regarded as the distinctive merits of English liberty. That a good government is an organism not a mechanism—in other words, that it must grow naturally out of the condition of society, and cannot be imposed by theorists—that representative assemblies with full powers are the sole efficient guardians of liberty—that liberty of conscience must be allied with political liberty—that a certain balance should be preserved between the different powers of the State, and that property produces empire, are among the main propositions on which Harrington insists; and most of them are even now the main points of difference between English liberty and that which emanates from a French source. Harrington was also a warm advocate of the ballot. He was answered by Ferne, Bishop Chester, in a book called '*Pian-Piano*;' by Matthew Wren, son of the Bishop of Ely, and in the '*Holy Commonwealth*' of Baxter.

testantism simply to emancipate themselves from Papal control; and in the next place, the Catholic population in several countries was sufficiently numerous to resist with some chance of success their Protestant rulers. The points, therefore, which were most accentuated in the teaching of the writers of this school were the power of the Pope to depose sovereigns, especially for heresy, and the right of the people to resist an heretical ruler. The vigour with which these propositions were maintained is sufficiently illustrated by the dealings of the Popes with the English Government; and the arguments in their support were embodied by Cardinal Bellarmine in his treatise 'On the Supremacy of the Sovereign Pontiff over Temporal Affairs,' and by the famous Jesuit Suarez in his 'Defence of the Faith.' The Parliament of Paris ordered the first of these works to be burnt in 1610, and the second in 1614.

The most ardent and by far the most able champions of Ultramontanism were the Jesuits, who, however, went so far beyond the other theologians in their principles that they may be justly regarded as a separate class. The marvellous flexibility of intellect and the profound knowledge of the world that then at least characterised their order soon convinced them that the exigencies of the conflict were not to be met by following the old precedents of the Fathers, and that it was necessary to restrict in every way the overgrown power of the sovereigns. They saw, what no others in the Catholic Church seem to have perceived, that a great future was in store for the people, and they laboured with a zeal that will secure them everlasting honour to hasten and direct the emancipation. By a system of the boldest casu-

istry, by a fearless use of their private judgment in all matters which the Church had not strictly defined, and above all by a skilful employment and expansion of some of the maxims of the schoolmen, they succeeded in disentangling themselves from the traditions of the past, and in giving an impulse to liberalism wherever their influence extended. Suarez, in the book to which I have just referred, devoted himself especially to the question of the mediate or immediate nature of the Divine Right of Kings.[1] It was a question, he acknowledged, that could not be decided either by Scripture or the Fathers; but the schoolmen were on the whole favourable to the latter view, and the Popes had often asserted their own authority over sovereigns, which according to Ultramontane principles was almost decisive of the question. He elaborated the doctrine of the 'social contract' with such skill and emphasis as to place the sovereign altogether upon a lower level than the nation, while the Pope towered over all. According to these principles, the interests of the sovereign should be subordinated to those of the people. The king derived all his power immediately from the State: and in a case of extreme misgovernment, when the preservation of the State required it, the nation might depose its sovereign,[2] and might, if

[1] Suarez, *De Fide*, lib. iii. cap. 2. This book of Suarez was written in reply to one by James I. of England.

[2] He says that 'Potestatem hanc deponendi regem esse posse vel in ipsa republica vel in Summo Pontifice, diverso tamen modo. Nam in republica solum per modum defensionis necessariæ ad conservationem suam, . . . tum ex vi juris naturalis quo licet vim vi repellere, tum quia semper hic casus ad proprium reipublicæ conservationem necessarius, intelligitur exceptus in primo illo fœdere quo respublica potestatem suam in regem transtulit. . . . At

necessary, depute any person to kill him.[1] The case of an heretical prince was still plainer: for heresy being a revolt against that Divine authority to which the sovereign ultimately owed his power, it in a certain sense annulled his title to the throne; still, as the Pope was the arbiter of these questions, a sentence of deposition should precede rebellion.[2] The Pope had the power of issuing this sentence on two grounds—because he was the superior of the temporal ruler, and also because heresy was a crime which fell under his cognisance, and which was worthy of temporal penalties. To deny that the Pope could inflict such penalties on heretics, no matter what may be their rank, is to fall under the suspicion of heresy;[3] to deny that death is a natural punishment for heresy was to assail the whole system of persecution which the Church had organised. In defending this doctrine against the charges brought against it on the ground of its dangerous consequences, Suarez maintained that the deposed king

vero in Summo Pontifice est hæc potestas tanquam in superiori habente jurisdictionem ad corripiendum reges.' (*De Fide*, lib. vi. cap. iv.)

[1] 'Ergo quando respublica juste potest regem deponere, recte faciunt ministri ejus regem cogendo vel interficiendo si sit necesse.' (*Ibid.*) Suarez adds, however, that before pronouncing a sentence of deposition against the sovereign, it is at least advisable and becoming (though not absolutely necessary) for the nation to apply to the Pope for his sanction. This notion has been developed at length by De Maistre, *Le Pape*.

[2] 'Statim per hæresim rex ipso facto privatur aliquo modo dominio et proprietate sui regni, quia vel confiscatum manet vel ad legitimum successorem Catholicum ipso jure transit, et nihilominus non potest statim regno privari, sed juste illud possidet et administrat donec per sententiam saltem declaratoriam criminis condemnetur.' (Lib. vi. cap. iv.)

[3] Bianchi has collected a striking chain of passages in defence of this proposition (tom. i. pp. 145–147).

could only be killed by those whom the Pope had expressly authorised;[1] but there can be little doubt that the Jesuits looked with a very indulgent eye on all attempts at assassination that were directed against a deposed sovereign who was in opposition to the Church.

It would however be a mistake to suppose that the Jesuits advocated liberal principles only with a view to theological advantages or in Protestant countries or under the shelter of ecclesiastical authorities. More than once they maintained even their most extreme forms in the midst of Catholic nations, and, strange as the assertion may appear, it is in this order that we find some of the most rationalistic intellects of the age. Two of the leading characteristics of a rationalistic mind, as we have already seen, are a love of appealing to the general principles of natural religion rather than to dogmatic tenets, and a disposition to wrest the latter into conformity with the former: and of these two tendencies we find among the Jesuits some striking examples. The famous work of Mariana 'Concerning the King and the Regal Institution' will furnish us with an illustration of these truths.

This extremely remarkable book was published at Toledo in 1599, and it bears at its commencement the approbation of the leaders of the Jesuits.[2] It was dedicated to Philip III., for whose benefit it was written: and it must be acknowledged that, among the countless works that have been dedicated to

[1] 'Si Papa regem deponat, ab illis tantum poterit expelli vel interfici quibus ipse id commiserit.' (*De Fide*, lib. vi. c. iv.)

[2] It is signed by Stephanus Hojeda, Visitor of the Jesuits in the province of Toledo.

sovereigns, it would be impossible to find one more free from the taint of adulation. Its ostensible object was to collect a series of moral precepts for the benefit of sovereigns, but the really important part, and that with which we are alone concerned, is the examination of the rights of nations against their sovereigns. The cardinal point upon which this examination turns is a distinction which some of the schoolmen had derived from Aristotle, and which became very prominent in the beginning of the seventeenth century, between a king and a tyrant, as two things almost generically different. A ruler who belonged to the latter class had no right to the name of king, nor could he claim the privileges or the reverence attached to it; and to be a tyrant, as Mariana explained, it was not necessary to be a usurper.[1] Every ruler, however legitimate, belongs to this category if the main principle of his government is selfishness, and if he habitually sacrifices the interests of his people to his lusts or to his pride. Such rulers are the worst of evils, the enemies of the human race. They had been figured by the ancients in the fables of Antæus, the Hydra and the Chimæra, and the greatest achievements of the heroes of antiquity had been their destruction.[2]

This being the case, the important question arose, whether it is now lawful to kill a tyrant?[3] That there should be no equivocation as to the nature of the inquiry, Mariana takes for his text the recent assassination of Henri III. of France by Clement. He relates, in a tone of evident admiration, how this

[1] *De Rege et Regis Institutione*, pp. 55–65 (1st ed.).
[2] *Ibid.* p. 62.
[3] *Ibid.* lib. i. ch. vi. 'An tyrannum opprimere fas sit?'

young Dominican, impelled by a religious enthusiasm and having fortified his courage by the services of the Church, had contrived to obtain an interview with the king, had stabbed him to death with a poisoned knife, and had himself fallen beneath the swords of the attendants. 'Thus,' he says, 'did Clement perish as many deem the eternal honour of France—a youth but four-and-twenty years of age, simple in mind and weak in body: but a higher might confirmed both his courage and his strength.'[1]

In examining the moral character of this act there was a great division of opinion. Very many extolled it as worthy of immortality; others, however, whose learning and sagacity were not to be despised, severely condemned it. They said that it was not lawful for a single unauthorised individual to condemn and slaughter the consecrated ruler of a nation—that David did not dare to slay his bitterest enemy because that enemy was the Lord's Anointed—that amid all the persecutions the Early Church underwent no Christian hand was ever raised against the monsters who filled the throne—that political assassinations have in the great majority of cases injured the cause they were meant to serve, and that if their legitimacy were admitted all respect for sovereigns would vanish and universal anarchy would ensue. 'Such,' added Mariana, 'are the arguments of those who espouse the cause of the tyrant, but the champions of the people can urge others that are not less numerous or less powerful.'[2] He then proceeds, in a strain that leaves

[1] P. 69. Mr. Hallam observes that the words 'æternum Galliæ decus' were omitted in the later editions, which, however, in other respects scarcely differed from the first. (*Hist. of Lit.*)

[2] P. 72.

no doubt as to his own opinion, to enumerate the arguments for tyrannicide. The people had conceded a certain measure of their power to their sovereign, but not in such a manner that they did not themselves retain a greater authority, and might not at any time recall what they had given if it was misused.[1] The common voice of mankind had enrolled the great tyrannicides of the past among the noblest of mankind. Who ever censured the acts or failed to admire the heroism of Harmodius or Aristogeiton or Brutus, or of those who freed their land from the tyranny of a Domitian, a Caracalla, or a Heliogabalus? And what was this common sentiment but the voice of nature that is within us, teaching us to distinguish what is right from what is wrong?[2] If some ferocious beast had been let loose upon the land, and was devastating all around him, who would hesitate to applaud the man who at the risk of his life had ventured to slay it? Or what words would be deemed too strong to brand the coward who remained a passive spectator while his mother or the wife of his soul was torn and crushed? Yet the most savage animal is but an inadequate image of a tyrant, and neither wife nor mother has so high a claim upon our affections as our country.[3]

[1] 'Certe a republica unde ortum habet regia potestas, rebus exigentibus Regem in jus vocari posse et si sanitatem respuat' principatu spoliari. Neque ita in principem jura potestatis transtulit ut non sibi majorem reservarit potestatem. . . . . Populis volentibus tributa nova imperantur, leges constituuntur; et quod est amplius populi sacramento jura imperandi quamvis hæreditaria successori confirmantur.' (Pp. 72, 73.) Very remarkable words to have been written by a Spaniard and a priest nearly a century before Locke.

[2] 'Et est communis sensus quasi quædam naturæ vox mentibus nostris indita, auribus insonans lex, qua a turpi honestum secernimus.' (P. 74.)

[3] Pp. 72–74.

These were the chief arguments on either side, and it remained to draw the conclusion. The task, Mariana assures us, is not difficult, but it is necessary to distinguish between different cases. In the first place the tyrant may be a conqueror who by force of arms, and without any appeal to the people, had obtained possession of the sovereign power. In this case there was no obscurity: the example of Ehud was a guide, and the tyrant might be justly slain by any of the people.[1] The next case was that of a sovereign elected by the nation, or who had obtained his throne by hereditary right, but who sacrificed his people to his lusts, infringed the laws, despised true religion, and preyed upon the fortunes of his subjects. If there existed in the nation any authoritative assembly of the people, or if such an assembly could be convoked, it should warn the sovereign of the consequences of his acts, declare war against him if he continued obdurate, and if no other resource remained, pronounce him to be a public enemy and authorise any individual to slay him.[2] If in the last

[1] 'In eo consentire tum philosophos tum theologos video, eum principem qui vi et armis rempublicam occupavit, nullo præterea jure, nullo publico civium consensu, perimi a quocumque, vita et principatu spoliari posse.' (Pp. 74, 75.) A few lines lower comes the eulogy of Ehud. The 'consenting theologians' are not cited—and, indeed, Mariana scarcely ever quotes an ecclesiastical authority — but the reader may find a great many given in Suarez (*De Fide*, lib. vi. cap. iv.) St. Thomas justified Ehud on this general ground, and on this point seems to have differed little or not at all from Mariana.

[2] 'Si medicinam respuat princeps, neque spes ulla sanitatis relinquatur, sententia pronunciata licebit reipublicæ ejus imperium detrectare primum, et quoniam bellum necessario concitabitur ejus defendendi consilia explicare. . . . . Et si res feret neque aliter se respublica tueri possit, eodem defensionis jure ac vero potiore auctoritate et propria, principem publicum hostem declara-

place the king who had degenerated into a tyrant had suppressed the right of assembly, no steps should be taken unless the tyranny was flagrant, unquestionable, and intolerable; but if this were so, the individual who, interpreting the wishes of the people, slew the sovereign, should be applauded.[1] Nor was this doctrine likely to lead to as many tragedies as was supposed. 'Happy indeed would it be for mankind were there many of such unflinching resolution as to sacrifice life and happiness for the liberty of their country: but the desire of safety withholds most men from great deeds, and this is why of the great multitude of tyrants so few have perished by the sword.' 'It is, however, a salutary thought for princes to dwell upon, that if they oppress their people and make themselves intolerable by their vices, to slay them is not only without guilt but is an act of the highest merit.'[2]

There was, however, one aspect of the question of tyrannicide which presented to the mind of the author considerable difficulty, and to which he devoted a separate chapter. That to slay a tyrant with a dagger was a meritorious act he was perfectly convinced, but to mingle poison with his food was a somewhat different matter. This distinction, Mariana tells us incidentally, was first suggested to him, many years before the publication of the book, by one of his scholars, when, as a public instructor, he was impressing his doctrines upon the youth of Sicily.[3] The

tum ferro perimere. Eademque facultas esto cuicumque privato, qui spe impunitatis abjecta, neglecta salute, in conatum juvandi rempublicam ingredi voluerit.' (P. 76.)

[1] 'Qui votis publicis favens eum perimere tentarit, haud quaquam inique eum fecisse existimabo.' (P. 77.)

[2] Pp. 77, 78.

[3] P. 83.

way in which he resolves it is very remarkable as exhibiting the modes of thought or reasoning from which these speculations sprang. He in the first place shows very clearly that nearly every argument that justifies the one mode of slaughter may be also urged in favour of the other; but notwithstanding this, he concludes that poison should be prohibited, because he says it is prohibited by that common sentiment of mankind which is the voice of nature and the test of right.[1]

The doctrine of tyrannicide, of which Mariana may be regarded as the chief apostle, is one that is eminently fitted to fascinate men who are just emerging out of a protracted servitude, and who have not yet learned to calculate the ulterior consequences of political acts. To slay a royal criminal, who, for the gratification of his own insatiable vanity, is causing the deaths of thousands of the innocent, and blasting the prosperity of his nation, is an act that seems at first sight both laudable and useful, especially if that sovereign had violated the obligations

[1] 'Nos tamen non quid facturi sint homines sed quid per naturæ leges concessum sit despicimus. . . . Et est naturæ vox communis hominum sensus vituperantium si quis in alios quantumvis hostes veneno grassetur.' (Pp. 83–85.) It is said that Mariana, in his History, has treated kings with considerable deference; but his antimonarchical opinions appear very strongly in a short work called, 'Discourse on the Defects of the Government of the Jesuits,' which contains—what is extremely rare in the writings of the members of the order—a bitter attack on the general, and a fierce denunciation of the despotic principles on which the society is constituted. The following (which I quote from a French translation of 1625) is very characteristic:—'Selon mon opinion, la monarchie nous met par terre, non pour estre monarchie ains pour n'estre bien tempérée. C'est un furieux sanglier qui ravage tout par où il passe, et si on ne l'arreste tout court, nous ne devons espérer de repos.' (Ch. x.)

by which he had bound himself. A man who has committed an act of treason, which the law would punish by death, has incurred a penalty and retained a privilege. The penalty is that he should be put to death; the privilege is that he should only be put to death by the constituted authorities and in the legal way. But if in addition to his original crime he has paralysed the law that should avenge it, it may plausibly be argued that he has forfeited his privilege: he has placed himself above the law, and has therefore placed himself out of the law and become an outlaw. Besides this, the exceedingly prominent place tyrannicide occupies in the history both of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews tells powerfully upon the imagination, and it is quite certain that none of these nations looked upon the act with the feelings of modern Englishmen.

But to those who take a wider view of the field of politics, the immense danger of encouraging individuals to make themselves the arbiters of the destinies of a nation will be far more than sufficient to counterbalance these arguments. The degree of favour that public opinion shows to political assassinations, though by no means the sole, is perhaps the principal regulator of their number; for although the conspirator may be prepared to encounter universal obloquy, the direction his enthusiasm has taken is, in the first instance, determined by the mental atmosphere he breathes. And if it be true, as Mariana asserts, that the number of those who possess sufficient resolution to engage in such enterprises is under all cases small, it is also true that those few would usually be men pre-eminently unfit to adjudicate upon the policy of nations. For the amount of

heroism it evokes is no test or measure of the excellence of a cause. Indeed, nothing can be more certain than that the highest displays of courage, self-sacrifice, and enthusiasm are usually elicited not by those motives of general philanthropy which all men must applaud, but by attachment to some particular class of disputed questions or to the interests of some particular party. The excitement of controversy, the very fact that the opinions in question have but few adherents, the impossibility of triumphing by normal means, and the concentration of every thought upon a single aspect of a single subject, all stimulate fanaticism. The great majority of men will do far more for a cause they have espoused, in spite of the opposition of those around them, than for one that is unquestionably good. We accordingly find that among the many attempts that were made upon the lives of rulers in the sixteenth century, nearly all were produced by attachment to certain religious opinions which the conspirator desired to see predominate, and from which an immense proportion of the people dissented. Never was there a spirit of more complete and courageous self-sacrifice than instigated Ravaillac to slay perhaps the very best sovereign of modern Europe. And have we not, in our own day, seen the representatives of a sect of revolutionists whose principles are rejected by the great majority of educated men attempting, again and again, to further their views by the assassination of a monarch of a different nation from their own, whose throne is based upon universal suffrage, and who, in the judgment of a large proportion of his contemporaries, has proved himself the chief pillar of order in Europe?

These considerations, which the old Jesuit writers completely omitted, serve to show that even in the best case—even in those instances in which the conspirator is seeking only what he firmly believes to be good—the practice of tyrannicide is almost always an evil. But we have to add to this the assassinations from corrupt motives that in societies favourable to tyrannicide have always been frequent: we have to add also the danger to the State resulting from that large class of men so prominent in all criminal records who hang upon the border of insanity, who, partly from an excess of vanity and partly from natural weakness of volition, and partly under the influence of a kind of monomania, are drawn by an irresistible fascination to the perpetration of any crime surrounded with circumstances of notoriety: and when we still further consider the perpetual insecurity and the distrust between sovereign and people that must necessarily exist when these conspiracies are frequent, we shall have little hesitation in pronouncing upon the question. Political assassination is denounced, in general terms, as an atrocious crime simply because in the great majority of instances it is so; and even in the extremely few cases that are generally recognised as exceptions, we have to deduct from the immediate advantages that were obtained the evil of an example that has been misused.

It is arguments of this kind, drawn from expediency, that are now regarded as most decisive on this as on many other questions of political ethics; but they could have little weight in the early stages of political life, when the minds of men were still moulded by theological discussions, and were consequently predisposed to deduce all conclusions with an

inflexible logic from general principles. Tyrannicide accordingly occupied an extremely prominent place in the revival of liberalism in Europe. The first instance in which it was formally supported by a theologian appears to have been in 1408, shortly after the Duke of Orleans had been murdered at the instigation of the Duke of Burgundy, when a priest and, as is generally said, a Franciscan[1] named John Petit, who was then professor of theology in the University of Paris, justified the act, and delivered a public oration in defence of the thesis, 'That it is lawful, according to natural and divine law, for every subject to slay or cause to be slain a traitor and disloyal tyrant.' This doctrine was afterwards energetically denounced by Gerson and condemned by the Council of Constance.[2] After the Reformation, however, it was very widely diffused. Grévin, one of the immediate successors of Jodelle, and therefore one of the founders of the French Drama, brought it upon the stage in a play upon 'The Death of Cæsar,' which was first acted in 1560, and was re-printed with an anti-monarchical preface at the time of Ravaillac.[3] A few years before the pub-

[1] He is called so in, I think, every history of the occurrence I have met with; but a writer in the *Journal des Sçavans* of 1748 maintains (pp. 994–996) that there is some doubt upon the point. It is worthy of remark that the duke who instigated the murder, and probably inspired the apology, died himself by the hand of an assassin. (Van Bruyssel, *Hist. du Commerce Belge*, tom. ii. pp. 48, 49.)

[2] Mariana rejects this decree without hesitation, on Ultramontane principles, as not having been confirmed by the Pope (*De Rege*, p. 79). Suarez seems to think it binding, but argues (*De Fide*, lib. vi. c. 4) that it applies only to tyrants *in regimine*, because the Council condemns the opinion that 'subjects' may slay a tyrant, and a tyrant *in titulo* has, properly speaking, no 'subjects.'

[3] There is a full notice of this play in Charles, *La Comédie en France au Seizième Siècle.*

lication of the work of Mariana, no less than three Jesuits—Franciscus Toletus, Emmanuel Sa, and the famous Molina—had defended it.[1] The first, who was made a cardinal in 1583, justified it chiefly in the case of tyrants who had usurped dominion;[2] but intimated also, that the nation might depose a lawful sovereign, that it might condemn him to death, and that then any individual might slay him. Sa[3] and Molina[4] expressed the same opinion with still greater emphasis, and Balthazar Ayala, the most illustrious Spanish lawyer of the age, in his celebrated work on the 'Rights of War,' which was published in 1582, though utterly repudiating their doctrine con-

[1] Sa was a Portuguese—the other two were Spaniards. The prominence this doctrine acquired in Spain in the reign of Philip II. is probably in part due to the contest of Spain with Elizabeth, who was regarded as a tyrant both *in titulo* and *in regimine*, and consequently naturally marked out for assassination. Mariana's book was probably written under Philip II., for the royal privilege to print it was granted only three months after the death of that king.

[2] 'Adverte duplicem esse tyrannum; unum potestate et dominio qui non habet titulum verum sed tyrannice occupat rempublicam: et hunc licet occidere, dum aliter non potest liberari respublica et dum spes est libertatis probabilis; aliter non licet privato cuilibet occidere. Alterum administrationi qui habet quidem verum titulum sed tyrannice tractat subditos, et hunc non licet absque publica auctoritate occidere.' (*Summa Casuum Conscientiæ*, lib. v. c. vi. p. 653.)

[3] 'Tyrannice gubernans juste acquisitum dominium non potest spoliari sine publico judicio; lata vero sententia potest quisque fieri executor: potest autem deponi a populo etiam qui juravit ei obedientiam perpetuam si monitus non vult corrigi. At occupantem tyrannice potestatem quisque de populo potest occidere, si aliud non sit remedium, est enim publicus hostis.' (*Aphorism. Confessariorum*, verb. *Tyrannus.*)

[4] 'Tyrannum primo modo nefas est privatis interficere; possit tamen respublica quoad capita convenire, eique resistere, lataque sententia deponere ab administratione atque illum depositum punire. Secundo modo tyrannum quivis de republica potest licite eum interficere.' (*Comment.* Pars IV. tract iii. disp. 6.)

cerning tyrants with a lawful title, cordially embraced it in the case of usurpers.[1] The French Jesuits, it is true, appalled by the outcry that was raised against them on account of the work of Mariana, repudiated its principles; but, in 1611, Mariana found a defender in another Jesuit named Kellerus,[2] who only made a single reservation—that a formal sentence was always necessary before tyrannicide was justifiable. When Henri III. was assassinated by Clement, the Catholics of the League received the news with a burst of undisguised exultation, and in many churches the image of the murderer was placed for reverence upon the altar of God. The Pope publicly pronounced the act to be worthy of ranking with that of Judith, he said that it could only have been accomplished by the special assistance of Providence, and he blasphemously compared it to the Incarnation and to the Resurrection.[3] On the other hand, it would be unfair to forget the murder of the Duke of Guise in France and of Cardinal Beaton in Scotland, the justification of these instances of political assassination by the most eminent Protestants, and the many seditious works at least verging upon an approval of tyrannicide that issued from the Protestant press.

Still the main champions of tyrannicide were

[1] 'Tyrannum qui per vim et illegitime principatum occupavit, si tyrannis aliter tolli non possit, occidere cuilibet licitum sit.' (*De Jure et Officiis bellicis*, lib. i.)

[2] In a book called *Tyrannicidium, seu Scitum Catholicorum de Tyranni Internecione*. This book (which was written in reply to a Calvinistic attack) contains a great deal of information about the early literature of tyrannicide. It bears the approbation of Bussæus, the head of the Jesuits in Northern Germany.

[3] *De Thou*, liv. xcvi. The Pope was Sixtus V.

unquestionably the Jesuits, and it is not difficult to discover the reason. It has been said that the despotic character of their government has in these later times proved inimical to the growth of individuality among them, and that while the institution considered as a whole has flourished it has failed remarkably to produce originality either in intellect or in character.[1] But however this may be now, it is certain that it was not so in the early days of the society, when a few isolated Jesuits were scattered through a community of heretics waging a continued war against overwhelming numbers. All the resources of their minds were then taxed to the utmost, and they had every motive to encourage an opinion that enabled a single individual, by an act of self-devotion, to sway the destinies of a nation.

It may be said that the work of Mariana is an extreme instance of Jesuitical principles, and in a certain sense this is undoubtedly true. Mariana stands almost alone among his brethren in the directness and absence of qualifications that characterises his teaching, and he is still more remarkably distinguished for the emphasis with which he dwells upon purely political rights. In his book the interests of the Church, though never forgotten, never eclipse or exclude the interests of the people, and all the barriers that are raised against heresy are equally raised against tyranny. But his doctrine of tyrannicide, extreme, exaggerated, and dangerous as it is, was but a rash conclusion from certain principles which were common to almost all the theologians of his order,

[1] Lamennais, *Affaires de Rome*. Since the days of Lamennais the names of Ravignan and Félix have done much to rescue the order from the reproach.

and which are of the most vital importance in the history both of civil liberty and of Rationalism. In nearly every writing that issued from this school we find the same desire to restrict the power of the sovereign and to augment the power of the people, the same determination to base the political system on a doctrine derived from reason rather than from authority, the same tendency to enunciate principles the application of which would—whether their authors desired it or not—inevitably extend beyond the domain of theology. All or nearly all these writers urged in the interests of the Church that doctrine of a 'social contract' which was destined at a later period to become the cornerstone of the liberties of Europe. Nearly all drew a broad distinction between kings and tyrants, nearly all divided the latter into those who were tyrants, as it was said, *in regimine* (that is to say, legitimate rulers who misgoverned), and tyrants *in titulo* (that is to say, rulers with no original authority); and nearly all admitted that the Papal deposition, by annulling the title-deeds of regal power, transferred the sovereign from the former class to the latter. These were the really important points of their teaching, for they were those which deeply and permanently influenced the habits of political thought, and on these points the Jesuits were almost unanimous. In the application of them they differed. Usually tyrannicide, at least in the case of a tyrant *in regimine*, was condemned, though, as we have seen, there were not wanting those who maintained that the nation as well as the Pope might depose a sovereign, might condemn him to death and depute any individual to slay him. In the case of a tyrant *in titulo* the more violent opinion seems to have

predominated. If he were a conqueror or a usurper, St. Thomas Aquinas had distinctly said that he might be slain.[1] If he were a monarch deposed for heresy, it was remembered that heresy itself might justly be punished with death, and that every act of the deposed sovereign against Catholicity was a crime of the deepest dye perpetrated by one who had no legitimate authority in the State. The cloud of subtle distinctions that were sometimes raised around these questions might give scope for the ingenuity of controversialists, but they could have but little influence over the passions of fanatics.[2]

If we now turn from the Jesuits to the Gallican section of the Catholic Church the contrast is very remarkable. We find ourselves in presence of a new order of interests, and consequently of new principles. The great power of the French Church and of the monarchy with which it was connected had early induced its bishops to assume a tone of independence in their dealings with the Papal See that was elsewhere unknown, and a close alliance between Church and State was the manifest interest of both. But in order that such an alliance should be effectual, it was necessary that the Pope should be reduced as much as possible to the level of an ordinary bishop, while the sovereign was exalted as

[1] See Suarez, *De Fide*, lib. vi. cap. iv.

[2] On the inevitable tendency of the doctrine of deposition to tyrannicide, there are some good remarks in Bossuet, *Defensio*, lib. i. c. 3. The doctrine of tyrannicide among the Jesuits seems to have died away after Suarez: the political condition of Europe no longer made it of great service to the Church, and the controversies of Jansenism diverted the energy of the Jesuits into new channels. Pascal, in his *Provincial Letters*, barely touches this aspect of the Jesuit teaching.

the immediate representative of the Deity. In this way the bishops were freed from the pressure of Papal ascendency, and the sovereign from the worst consequences of excommunication. The advocates of Gallican principles have been able to prove decisively that in nearly all attempts to prevent the encroachments of the Pope upon secular dominion French theologians have been prominent, while their opponents have rejoined with equal truth that the Gallican authorities were by no means unanimous in their sentiments, and that the negation of the Papal claims was not usually thrown into a very dogmatic form.[1] The case of an heretical prince before the Reformation was hardly discussed,[2] and in other cases the rivalry between the two sections of the Church was rather implied in acts than expressed in formal statements. On the one side there was a steady tendency to exalt the spiritual power of the Popes above that of the Councils, and their temporal power above that of kings; on the other side there was a corresponding tendency in the opposite direction. As the power of deposition was in the middle ages the centre of the more liberal system of politics, and as everything that was taken from the popes was given to the kings, the Gallican teaching was always inimical to freedom. At the same time, as the interference of an Italian priest with French politics offended the national pride, it was eminently popular; and thus, as in many sub-

[1] See on the one side Bianchi, *Puissance Souveraine*, and on the other the *Defensio* of Bossuet.

[2] According to Bianchi, the first Catholic who maintained that the Pope had no power over the temporal possessions of princes who fell into heresy was an Englishman of the time of James I.—William Barclay, the father of the author of the *Argenis*. W. Barclay wrote against and was answered by Bellarmine. (Bianchi, tom. ii. pp. 768, 769.)

sequent periods of French history, patriotism proved destructive to liberty.

It appeared for a short time as if the Reformation were about to give rise to new combinations. The invectives of the Protestants against the Papal Power produced a momentary reaction in its favour, which was remarkably shown in the States General assembled at Paris in 1615. The Third Estate, either because Protestant principles were diffused among its members or because it represented especially the secular feelings of the middle classes, then proposed, among other articles, one declaring that the Pope possessed no power of deposing sovereigns, or under any circumstances releasing subjects from the oath of allegiance; but the nobles and the clergy refused to ratify it, and Cardinal Perron, probably as the representative of the clergy, asserted the Ultramontane principles with the strongest emphasis.[1]

Very soon, however, a complete change passed over the minds of the French clergy. The Huguenots, in several of their synods, had dwelt with great emphasis upon their denial of the existence of a mediate power between the Deity and a king, and there was some danger that if they possessed the monopoly of this opinion the civil power might be attracted to their side. Besides this the French Protestants made war against their rulers for the purpose of obtaining liberty of conscience, and the French Catholics naturally pronounced these wars to be sinful. In 1668 the Sorbonne asserted the absolute independence of the civil power, and the same thing was again declared in the famous Articles of 1682, which are the recog-

[1] Bianchi, tom. i. pp. 96–104.

nised basis of Gallicanism. In his defence of these articles Bossuet soon afterwards systematised the whole theology of the school. The general result, as far as it regards civil liberty, may be briefly told. The king occupied his throne by the direct and immediate authority of the Deity, and is consequently, in his temporal capacity, altogether independent of the Pope and of the wishes of the people. Every pope who had exercised or claimed a power of deposition had exceeded his functions and been guilty of usurpation; every subject who had raised his hand against the sovereign or his agents had committed a mortal sin. The sole duty of the nation is to obey, and from this obligation no tyranny and no injustice can release it. If the rulers of the people are as wolves, it is for the Christians to show themselves as sheep.[1]

Such was the teaching of the different sections of the Catholic Church. If we now turn to Protestantism we find a diversity at least equally striking and not less manifestly due to the diversity of interests. At the same time, although the opinions advocated by any particular section at a particular time were mainly the result of the special circumstances under which it was placed, there were some general considerations that complicated the movement. In the first place, the fact that the Reformation was essentially an act of spiritual rebellion—an appeal from those in authority to the judgments of the people—gave an impulse to the spirit of insubordination which was still further strengthened by the republican form that many of the new organisa-

[1] *Defensio*, lib. i. c. 15, 16. *Avertissements sur les Lettres de M. Jurieu*, no. 5.

tions assumed. In the Early Church the ecclesiastical government had combined in a very remarkable manner the principle of authority and the principle of liberty by magnifying to the highest point the episcopal authority while the bishops were themselves elected by universal suffrage. But a process of gradual centralisation soon destroyed this balance, and transformed the ecclesiastical organisation from a republic into a monarchy; and although the primitive elements were revived in Protestantism, they were revived in such a way that their original character was essentially falsified. For the system of popular election and the supreme and divine authority of the episcopacy, which in the Early Church formed the two compensatory parts of a single scheme, at the Reformation were violently dissevered and thrown into the strongest antagonism — the Calvinistic Churches constituting themselves the leading champions of the one, while Anglicanism was the representative of the other.

Now it has often been observed, and is in itself sufficiently obvious, that when men have formed an ecclesiastical organisation which is intensely democratic, they will have a certain predisposition in favour of a political organisation of a kindred nature. If in Church government they are accustomed to restrict very jealously the influence of the ruler, to diffuse as much as possible the supreme power, and to regard the will of the majority as the basis of authority, they will scarcely submit without a murmur to a political system in which all power is centralised in a single man, and from which all popular influence has been carefully eliminated. Puritanism has therefore a natural bias towards democracy, and

Episcopalianism, which dwells chiefly on the principle of authority, towards despotism. Special circumstances have occasionally modified but seldom or never altogether reversed these tendencies. Both forms have sometimes coalesced cordially with constitutional monarchy; but even in these cases it will usually be found that the Puritans have gravitated towards that party which verges most upon republicanism, and the Episcopalians to that which is most akin to despotism.

Another general tendency which has been much less frequently noticed than the preceding one results from the proportionate value attached by different Churches to the Old and New Testaments. To ascertain the true meaning of passages of Scripture is the business not of the historian but of the theologian, but it is at least an historical fact that in the great majority of instances the early Protestant defenders of civil liberty derived their political principles chiefly from the Old Testament, and the defenders of despotism from the New. The rebellions that were so frequent in Jewish history formed the favourite topic of the one—the unreserved submission inculcated by St. Paul, of the other. When, therefore, all the principles of right and wrong were derived from theology, and when by the rejection of tradition and ecclesiastical authority Scripture became the sole arbiter of theological difficulties, it was a matter of manifest importance in ascertaining the political tendencies of any sect to discover which Testament was most congenial to the tone and complexion of its theology.[1]

[1] Hallam, *Hist. of Lit.*

The favourable influence Protestantism was destined to exercise upon liberty was early shown. Among the accusations the Catholics brought against both Huss and Wycliffe none was more common than that they had proclaimed that mortal sin invalidated the title of the sovereign to his throne; and the last of these Reformers was also honourably distinguished for his strong assertion of the unchristian character of slavery.[1] At the Reformation the different attitudes assumed by different sovereigns towards the new faith and the constant vicissitudes of the religious wars exercised their natural influence upon the opinions of the leaders, but on the whole liberal views strongly predominated, although they were not often thrown into formal statements. Luther and Calvin both fluctuated a good deal upon the subject, and passages have been cited from each by the adherents of both views. It is probable, however, that Calvin ultimately inclined rather to the republican, and Luther—who had been greatly agitated by the war of the peasants—to the despotic theory. Zuinglius, without reasoning much on the subject,[2] accepted the liberal principles of his countrymen, and he died bravely upon the battle-field. Ulrich von Hutten appears to have adopted the Reformed tenets mainly as a principle of liberty, emancipating men both from intellectual and from political tyranny. 'From truth to liberty and from liberty to truth' was the programme he proclaimed. The country, however, in which Protestantism assumed the most emphatically liberal character was unquestionably Scotland, and

[1] Barrington *On the Statutes*, p. 280.

[2] See, however, some rather strong passages quoted by Kellerus, *Tyrannicidium*, pp. 73, 74.

the man who most clearly represented its tendency was Knox.

A great writer, whose untimely death has been one of the most serious misfortunes that have ever befallen English literature, and whose splendid genius, matured by the most varied and extensive scholarship, has cast a flood of light upon many of the subjects I am endeavouring to elucidate—has lately traced with a master-hand the antecedents of the Scotch Reformation.[1] He has shown that for a long period before it was accomplished there had been a fierce contest between the aristocracy on the one hand, and the sovereigns and Catholic clergy of Scotland upon the other; that this struggle at last terminated in the triumph of the aristocracy and the subversion of the Catholic establishment; that the new clergy, called into existence by a movement that was intensely hostile to the sovereign, were from the first the main promoters of sedition; and that being hated by the Crown, and having speedily quarrelled with the nobles, they cast themselves for support upon the people, and became the most courageous and energetic of the champions of democracy. The utter contempt for ecclesiastical traditions that characterised the Puritanical sects enabled them without much difficulty to mould their theology into conformity with their wishes: for Scripture was the only guide they acknowledged, and it has been most abundantly proved that from Scripture honest and able men have derived and do derive arguments in support of the most opposite opinions. In all the conflicts with the civil authorities Knox threw himself into the foreground, and constantly asserted, with

[1] See Buckle's *Hist. of Scottish Civilization.*

the most emphatic clearness, that it was the right and even the duty of a nation to resist a persecuting sovereign. Speaking of the persecutions that Mary had directed against the English Protestants, he declared that when they began it was the duty of the English people not merely to have deposed their queen but also to have put her to death; and he added, with characteristic ferocity, that they should have included in the same slaughter all her councillors and the whole body of the Catholic clergy.[1]

The opinions which Knox embodied chiefly in fierce declamations, and which he advocated mainly with a view to religious interests, were soon after systematised and at the same time secularised by Buchanan in a short dialogue entitled, 'De Jure Regni apud Scotos,' which was published in 1579, and which bears in many respects a striking resemblance to some of the writings that afterwards issued from the Jesuits. In Buchanan, however, we find none of those countless subtleties and qualifications to which the Catholic theologians commonly resorted in order to evade the decisions of the Fathers or the schoolmen, nor do we find anything about the deposing power of the Pope. The principles that were enunciated were perfectly clear and decisive: they were derived exclusively from reason, and they were directed equally

[1] 'And therfor I fear not to affirm that it had bene the dutie of the nobilitie, judges, rulers, and people of England, not only to have resisted and againstanded Marie, that Jesabel whome they call their queen, but also to have punished her to the death, with all the sort of her idolatrous preestes, together with all such as should have assisted her what tyme that shee and they openly began to suppresse Christes Evangil, to shed the blood of the saincts of God, and to erect that most devillish idolatrie, the Papistical abominations.' (Knox. *Appellation.*)

against every form of tyranny. The argument is based upon 'the social contract.' Men were naturally formed for society: in order to arrest the intestine discord that sprang up among them they created kings; in order to restrain the power of their kings they enacted laws. The nation being the source of regal power is greater than and may therefore judge the king; the laws being intended to restrain the king in case of collision, it is for the people and not for the ruler to interpret them. It is the duty of the king to identify himself with the law,[1] and to govern exclusively according to its decisions. A king is one who governs by law, and according to the interests of the people; a tyrant is one who governs by his own will, and contrary to the interests of the people. An opinion had been spread abroad by some that a king being trammelled by recognised constitutional ties might be resisted if he violated them, but that a tyrant who reigns where no constitution exists must be always obeyed; but this opinion was altogether false. The people may make war against a tyrant, and may pursue that war until he is slain. Though Buchanan does not expressly defend the slaughter of a tyrant by a private individual, he recalls in language of unqualified praise the memories of the tyrannicides of antiquity.

This little tract being in conformity with the spirit of the time, and especially with the spirit of the Scotch people, had a very great influence. Its main principles, as we have seen, differ but little from those of St. Thomas Aquinas and the schoolmen; but by disengaging them from the crowd of theological

[1] As Buchanan (imitating Cicero) tersely puts it, 'Rex, lex loquens; lex, rex mutus.'

considerations that had previously rendered them almost inoperative except when religious interests were concerned, Buchanan opened a new stage in the history of liberty. The doctrines, however, which he for the first time systematised had been at a still earlier period diffused among his fellow-countrymen. When Queen Elizabeth, in 1571, put some questions to a Scotch deputation concerning the reasons that had induced the Scots to depose their queen, she was immediately favoured in reply with a long dissertation on the manifest superiority of nations to their sovereigns; which, as Camden assures us, and as we can readily believe, she received with extreme indignation.[1] The same principles were no less general among the English Dissenters, and were exhibited alike in their writings and in their policy: Milton only translated into eloquent prose the no less eloquent acts of Cromwell.

It is difficult indeed to overrate the debt of gratitude that England owes both to her own Nonepiscopal Churches and to those of Scotland. In good report and in evil, amid persecution and ingratitude and horrible wrongs, in ages when all virtue seemed corroded and when apostasy had ceased to be a stain, they clung fearlessly and faithfully to the banner of her freedom. If the Great Rebellion was in England for the most part secular in its causes, it is no less true that its success was in a great measure due to the assistance of the Scotch, who were actuated mainly by religion, to the heroic courage infused into the troops by the English ministers, and to the spirit of enthusiasm created by the noble writings that were inspired by Puritanism. Neither the persecutions

[1] Camden *Annal.*, pars ii. (ad ann. 1571.)

of Charles nor the promised toleration of James ever caused them to swerve. Without their assistance English liberty would no doubt have been attained, but no one can say how long its triumph would have been retarded, or what catastrophes would have resulted from the strife. For it is to Puritanism that we mainly owe the fact that in England religion and liberty were not dissevered: amid all the fluctuations of its fortune,[1] it represented the alliance of these two principles, which the predominating Church invariably pronounced to be incompatible.

The attitude of this latter Church forms indeed a strange contrast to that of Puritanism. Created in the first instance by a court intrigue, pervaded in all its parts by a spirit of the most intense Erastianism, and aspiring at the same time to a spiritual authority scarcely less absolute than that of the Church which it had superseded, Anglicanism was from the beginning at once the most servile and the most efficient agent of tyranny. Endeavouring by the assistance of temporal authority and by the display of worldly pomp to realise in England the same position as Catholicism had occupied in Europe, she naturally flung herself on every occasion into the arms of the civil power. No other Church so uniformly betrayed and trampled on the liberties of her country.[2] In all those fiery trials through which

[1] It is worthy of remark, as showing their persistence, that probably the ablest modern advocate of what may be termed the Biblical aspect of liberty was Robert Hall.

[2] As Macaulay very truly and very eloquently wrote, 'The Church of England continued to be for more than 150 years the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty. The divine right of kings and the duty of passively obeying all their commands were her favourite tenets. She held those tenets firmly through times of op-

English liberty has passed since the Reformation, she invariably cast her influence into the scale of tyranny, supported and eulogised every attempt to violate the Constitution, and wrote the fearful sentence of eternal condemnation upon the tombs of the martyrs of freedom.[1] That no tyranny however gross, that no violation of the constitution however flagrant, can justify resistance; that all those principles concerning the rights of nations on which constitutional government is based are false, and all those efforts of resistance by which constitutional government is achieved are deadly sins, was her emphatic and continual teaching. 'A rebel,' she declared, 'is worse than the worst prince, and rebellion worse than the worst government of the worst prince hath hitherto been.' 'God placeth as well evil princes as good,' and therefore 'for subjects to deserve through their sins to have an evil prince and then to rebel against him were double and treble evil by provoking God more to plague them.' St. Paul counselled passive obedience under Caligula,

pression, persecution, and licentiousness, while law was trampled down, while judgment was perverted, while the people were eaten as though they were bread. Once, and but once—for a moment, and but for a moment—when her own dignity and property were touched, she forgot to practise the submission she had taught.' (*Essays*, vol. i. p. 60: ed. 1861.) Hallam, however, has disinterred a curious book called *A Short Treatise of Politique Power*, published by Poynet, Protestant Bishop of Winchester, in 1558, advocating the most seditious doctrines, and among others tyrannicide. But the explanation is simple: Poynet wrote during the persecution of Mary. (*Hist. of Lit.* vol. ii. pp. 37–40.)

[1] 'Eternal damnation is prepared for all impenitent rebels in hell with Satan the first founder of rebellion.' 'Heaven is the place of good obedient subjects, and hell the prison and dungeon of rebels against God and their prince.' (Homily on *Wilful Rebellion*.)

Claudius, and Nero, 'who were not only no Christians but pagans, and also either foolish rulers or cruel tyrants;' nay the Jews owed it even to Nebuchadnezzar, when 'he had slain their king, nobles, parents, children, and kinsfolk, burned their country cities, yea Jerusalem itself, and the holy temple, and had carried the residue into captivity.' Even the Blessed Virgin, 'being of the royal blood of the ancient natural kings of Jewry, did not disdain to obey the commandment of an heathen and foreign prince;' much more therefore should we 'obey princes, though strangers, wicked, and wrongful, when God for our sins shall place such over us,' unless, indeed, they enjoin anything contrary to the Divine command; but even 'in that case we may not in anywise withstand violently or rebel against rulers or make any insurrection, sedition, or tumults, either by force of arms or otherwise, against the anointed of the Lord or any of his officers, but we must in such case patiently suffer all wrongs.'[1]

'If I should determine no cases,' wrote Jeremy Taylor, when treating the question of resistance in the greatest work on Moral Philosophy that Anglicanism has produced, 'but upon such mighty terms as can be afforded in this question, and are given and yet prevail not, I must never hope to do any service to any interest of wisdom or peace, of justice or religion; and therefore I am clearly of opinion that no man who can think it lawful to fight against

[1] Homilies on *Wilful Rebellion* and on *Obedience*. The same doctrines were laid down in the Canons of Convocation in 1606, and by the University of Oxford in 1662, when censuring a preacher named Knight, who had said that subjects oppressed on account of religion might sometimes resist. (Hallam, *Const. Hist*, vol. i p. 415.)

the supreme power of his nation can be fit to read cases of conscience, for nothing can satisfy him whose conscience is armour of proof against the plain and easy demonstration of this question. . . . . The matter of Scripture being so plain that it needs no interpretation, the practice and doctrine of the Church, which is usually the best commentary, is now but of little use in a case so plain, yet this also is as plain in itself, and without any variety, dissent, or interruption universally agreed upon, universally practised and taught, that, let the powers set over us be what they will, we must suffer it and never right ourselves.'[1]

The teaching of which these extracts are examples was constantly maintained by the overwhelming majority of the Anglican clergy for the space of more than 150 years, and during the most critical periods of the history of the English Constitution. When Charles I. attempted to convert the monarchy into a despotism, the English Church gave him its constant and enthusiastic support. When, in the gloomy period of vice and of reaction that followed the Restoration, the current of opinion set in against all liberal opinions, and the maxims of despotism were embodied even in the oath of allegiance,[2] the Church

[1] *Ductor Dubitantium*, lib. iii. cap. iii. Ussher, who was perhaps still more competent than Taylor to express the sentiments of the Fathers, was at least equally emphatic. See Elrington's *Life of Ussher*, vol. i. p. 239. Berkeley made an ingenious attempt to show that passive obedience was ordained by the law of nature: see his *Discourse on Passive Obedience*.

[2] In the clause that it was not lawful 'on any pretence whatever to take up arms against the king.' This clause was expunged at the Revolution (Allen's *Hist. of Royal Prerogative in England*, p. 89). Magna Charta had declared that kings who violated it might be resisted.

of England directed the stream, allied herself in the closest union with a court whose vices were the scandal of Christendom, and exhausted her anathemas not upon the hideous corruption that surrounded her but upon the principles of Hampden and of Milton. All through the long series of encroachments of the Stuarts she exhibited the same spirit. The very year when Russell died was selected by the University of Oxford to condemn the writings of Buchanan, Baxter, and Milton, and to proclaim the duty of passive obedience in a decree which the House of Lords soon afterwards committed to the flames.[1] It was not till James had menaced her supremacy that the Church was aroused to resistance. Then indeed, for a brief but memorable period, she placed herself in opposition to the Crown, and contributed largely to one of the most glorious events in English history. But no sooner had William mounted the throne than her policy was reversed, her whole energies were directed to the subversion of the constitutional liberty that was then firmly established, and it is recorded by the great historian of the Revolution that at least nine-tenths of the clergy were opposed to the emancipator of England. All through the reaction under Queen Anne, all through the still worse reaction under George III., the same spirit was displayed. In the first period the clergy, in their hatred of liberty, followed cordially the leadership of the infidel Bolingbroke; in the second they were the most ardent supporters of the wars against America and against the French

[1] This decree is given in full in Wodrow's *Hist. of Church of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 506. See on this whole subject, Hallam, *Const. Hist.*, vol. ii. pp. 459-465 (ed. 1854).

Revolution, which have been the most disastrous in which England has ever engaged. From first to last their conduct was the same, and every triumph of liberty was their defeat.

There are contrasts that meet us in the history of Rationalism which it is impossible to realise without positive amazement. When we remember for how long a period the Church of England maintained that resistance to the regal power was in all cases a deadly sin, and that such men as a Washington or a Garibaldi were doomed 'to burn together in hell with Satan the first founder of rebellion,' it is hard to say whether the present condition of English public opinion shows more clearly the impotence of the theologians who were unable to prevent so absolute a rejection of their principles or the elasticity of the Church that has survived it.

Although, however, the general current of Anglican ecclesiastical opinion was on this subject extremely steady, there was one divine who forms a marked exception, and that divine was one of the ablest that Protestantism has ever produced. Hooker —not indeed the greatest but perhaps the most majestic of English writers—was not more distinguished for his splendid eloquence than for his tendency to elevate the principles of natural right, and for his desire to make the Church independent of the State. In his discussions of the nature of the civil power both of these characteristics are strikingly shown. In examining the true origin and functions of government he scarcely ever appeals to the decisions of the Fathers, and not often to the teachings of Scripture, but elaborates his theory from his own reason, aided by the great philosophers of antiquity. His

doctrine in its essential parts differs little from that of Buchanan. Individuals joining together in societies created kings to govern them. The regal power was at first absolute. but soon 'men saw that to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery, and this constrained them to come into laws wherein all men might see their duty.'[1] Although the king received his authority from the people in the first instance, it was not on that account the less sacred, for 'on whom the same is bestowed even at men's discretion they likewise do hold it of Divine right.' At the same time the king was subject to the law, and as the power of enacting laws resides with the whole people, any attempt upon his part to enact laws contrary to the will of the people is a tyranny. Such laws are, in fact, a nullity.[2]

From these principles we should naturally have supposed that Hooker would have drawn the conclusion of Buchanan, and would have maintained that the will of the people is a sufficient reason for changing the government. It is, however, an extremely remarkable fact as showing the spirit of the class to which he belonged that this great writer, who had exhibited so clearly the fundamental propositions of modern liberalism, who had emancipated himself to so great a degree from the prejudices of

[1] *Eccl. Pol.*, lib. i. sec. 10.

[2] 'The lawful power of making laws to command whole political societies of men belonging so properly unto the same entire societies, that for any prince or potentate, of what kind soever, upon earth to exercise the same of himself and not by express commission immediately and personally received from God, or else from authority derived at the first from their consent upon whose persons they impose laws, it is no better than mere tyranny. Laws they are not therefore which public approbation hath not made so.' (*Eccl. Pol.*, lib. i. sec 10.)

his profession, and who wrote with the strongest and most manifest bias in favour of freedom, shrank to the last from this conclusion. He desired to see the power of the government greatly restricted; he eulogised constitutional government as immeasurably superior to despotism; he even thought that the violation of a constitutional tie was a just cause for resistance, but when he came to the last great question he dismissed it with these melancholy words:—'May then a body-politick at all times withdraw, in whole or in part, that influence of dominion which passeth from it if inconvenience doth grow thereby? It must be presumed that supreme governors will not in such cases oppose themselves and be stiff in detaining that the use whereof is with public detriment, but surely without their consent I see not how the body should be able by any fresh means to help itself, saving when dominion doth escheat.'[1]

It is scarcely necessary, I think, to review in detail the other works which appeared in England upon this subject. A large proportion of them at least are well known: their arguments are little more than a repetition of those which I have described, and after all they were not the real causes of the developement. A spirit of freedom, fostered in England by the long enjoyment of political and social institutions far superior to those of other nations, had produced both a capacity and an ambition for freedom which must inevitably have triumphed, and it is a matter of comparative insignificance what particular arguments were selected as the pretext. On the other hand

[1] *Eccl. Pol.*, b. viii. ch. ii. At a later period Burnet threw himself into the liberal movement as cordially as Locke, but he was almost isolated in the Church.

the genius and the circumstances of the Anglican Church predisposed its leaders towards despotism, and they naturally grasped at every argument in its support. I may observe, however, that there was a slight difference of opinion among the English supporters of despotic principles.[1] The earliest school, which was represented chiefly by Barclay and Blackwood, appears to have acknowledged that men were born free, and to have admitted some possible circumstances under which resistance was lawful. The later school, which was led by Filmer, Heylin, Mainwaring, and Hobbes, entirely denied this original freedom. The 'Patriarcha' of Filmer, which was the principal exposition of the doctrines of the last class, rested, like some of the writings of the Gallican school, upon the supposition that the political government is derived from and is of the same nature as paternal government,[2] and it concluded that resistance was in

[1] This change is clearly shown in Sydney.

[2] Bossuet maintained this, remarking that 'Abimelech,' which was a name originally common to all the kings of Palestine, signifies 'My father king.' (*Defensio*, lib. i. c. 3.) In England the patriarchal theory of government seems to have become especially popular under James I. (see Hallam's *Hist. of Lit.*, vol. iii. p. 439 [ed. 1854]), but there are many traces of it at an earlier period. Thus in the *Institution of a Christian Man* (1537), and in *The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* (1543), passive obedience is unequivocally enforced as a deduction from the Fifth Commandment. 'I die,' said Lord Capel on the scaffold, in 1649, 'for keeping the Fifth Commandment, given by God himself, and written with His own finger. It commands obedience to parents; and all divines, differ as they will on other points, agree in this, and acknowledge that it includes the magistrate' (Marsden, *History of the Later Puritans, from* 1642 *to* 1662, p. 320). Milton, on the other hand, said; 'Pater et rex diversissima sunt. Pater nos genuit; at non rex nos sed nos regem creavimus. Patrem natura dedit populo, regem ipse populus dedit sibi; non ergo propter regem populus, sed propter populum rex est.' (*Defensio Pop. Ang.*, cap. i.)

all cases sinful. This book was in the first instance answered by Sydney, who opposed to it 'the social compact,' but rested a considerable portion of his argument on the Old Testament. At the Revolution, however, the clergy having revived the principles of Filmer,[1] Locke thought it necessary to publish another answer, and accordingly wrote his famous treatise of 'Government,' which differs from that of Sydney in being almost entirely based upon secular considerations, although a considerable space is devoted to the refutation of the theological arguments of his opponent. Locke adopts almost entirely the principles of Hooker, for whom he entertained feelings of deep and well-merited admiration, but he altogether discards the qualifications by which Hooker had sometimes neutralised his teaching. All government, he maintains, is the gift of the people for the people's advantage, and therefore no legislation is legitimate which is contrary to the people's interests, and no change of government wrong which is in accordance with them.[2] Prerogative is that measure of power which the nation concedes to its ruler, and the nation may either extend or restrict it.[3] To impose taxes on a people without their consent is simply robbery.[4]

[1] As Locke says, 'I should not speak so plainly of a gentleman long since past answering (Sir R. Filmer), had not the pulpit of late years publicly owned his doctrine, and made it the current divinity of the times.' (Preface to *Treatise on Government.*)

[2] 'The end of government being the good of the community, whatever alterations are made in it tending to that end cannot be an encroachment upon anybody, since nobody in government can have any right tending to any other end.' (*On Government*, c. xiv.)

[3] *Ibid.*, c. xviii.

[4] 'If anyone shall claim a power to lay or levy taxes on the people without their consent, he thereby invades the fundamental law of property, and subverts the end of government.' (*Ibid.*, ch. xi.)

Those who are appointed by the people to legislate have no power to transfer their authority to others,[1] nor may they govern except by established laws.[2] And as the sovereignty in the first instance emanates from the people, so the people may reclaim it at will. The ability with which these views were urged, and the favourable circumstances under which they appeared, gave them an easy triumph, and the Revolution made them the basis of the Constitution.

It is well worthy of remark that the triumph of toleration and the triumph of civil liberty should both have been definitively effected in England at the same time, and should both have found their chief champion in the same man. Both were achieved by laymen in direct opposition to the Church and in the moment of her extreme depression. Both too represented a movement of secularisation: for by the first, theological questions were withdrawn from the sphere of politics, and by the second the principle of authority was removed from a theological to a secular basis. But what especially characterises the triumph of English liberty is that, although it was effected contrary to the Church and contrary to the clergy, it was not effected contrary to religion. This —which, when we consider the mournful history of Continental liberty, may perhaps be regarded as the happiest fact in English history—was no doubt due

[1] 'The legislature cannot transfer the power of making laws, for, it being but a delegated power from the people, they who have it cannot pass it over to others.' (*On Government*, ch. xi.) This doctrine was very justly regarded by Grattan and Plunket as decisive against the constitutional character of the Act of Union between England and Ireland, which was passed without a dissolution, by a parliament that was notoriously corrupted and had been elected long before the measure was contemplated.

[2] *Ibid.*

in a great measure to the success with which the Dissenters had associated religion and liberty; to the essential imperfection of the Anglican theory, which left undefined the question when allegiance may be transferred to a triumphant rebel,[1] and also to the admirable moderation of Somers and Locke: but it was still more due to the genius of the Reformation. Never did Protestantism exhibit more clearly its admirable flexibility of doctrine, its capacity for modifying and recasting its principles to meet the wants of succeeding ages, than when, without any serious religious convulsion, the political system of England was based upon the direct negation of the unanimous teaching of the Early Church and of the

[1] The passages from Scripture which the Anglican divines cited as their political rules would seem to imply that allegiance should always be rendered to the sovereign *de facto*. This doctrine, however, was at the Revolution generally and indignantly repudiated by the clergy, who maintained that while King James held his court at St. Germains he alone was entitled to their allegiance. However, after the Revolution, Sancroft published a work called *Bishop Overall's Convocation Book*, which had been approved by both Houses of Convocation at the beginning of the reign of James I. This work (which had not before been published) asserted in the strongest terms the doctrine of passive obedience, based it on the patriarchal theory of government, and declared that in case of a change of government being effected by unrighteous means, allegiance should be transferred to the new power when it was 'thoroughly settled.' Thereupon Sherlock declared that he considered himself bound by the voice of the Church to take the oaths of allegiance to the government of William (which, to the world at large, seemed very far indeed from 'thoroughly settled'), and he accordingly accepted the deanery of St. Paul's. The explosion that followed is admirably described by Macaulay (ch. xvii.). It is evident that the doubt hanging over this part of the theory of the Anglican divines, was favourable to liberty—in the first place by weakening the logical force of that theory, and in the second place by giving those who shrank from absolutely rejecting it a pretext for joining the new government.

almost unanimous teaching of the National one. And the contrast the history of English liberty bears to that of Continental liberty becomes still more remarkable when we remember the attitude exhibited by the avowed opponents of Christianity. In England, with the exception of Shaftesbury, the most eminent of these were either indifferent or opposed to the movement. Under the government of the Stuarts, Hobbes not only maintained the most extreme views of Taylor and Ussher, but carried them to a point from which even those divines would have recoiled: for the result of his philosophy was nothing less than to make the civil ruler the supreme arbiter of the moral law. During the reaction under Queen Anne the clerical party owed its chief strength to the genius of Bolingbroke, who consolidated its broken forces, and elaborated with an almost dazzling eloquence his ideal of 'A Patriot King' to counterbalance the ideal of liberty. And at a still later period, while Bishop Horsley was proclaiming that 'subjects had nothing to say to the laws except to obey them,' Hume was employing all his skill in investing with the most seductive colours the policy of the Stuarts, in rendering the great supporters of liberty in the seventeenth century either odious or ridiculous, and in throwing into the most plausible aspects the maxims of their opponents.[1]

[1] Among the less eminent freethinkers there were, indeed, some exceptions to this tendency. Thus Tindal wrote a tract against Passive Obedience in 1694, a defence of Toleration in 1697, and a defence of a Free Press in 1698. Toland too wrote in 1702, a somewhat remarkable book called *Anglia Libera*, in which he advocated very eloquently the political principles of Locke, denounced strongly the doctrine of Hobbes that a sovereign has a right to dictate the religion of his subjects, and maintained that 'the success of the Protestant

It is remarkable that while England and France have been the two nations which have undoubtedly done most for the political emancipation of mankind, they have also been those in which the National Churches were most bitterly opposed to freedom. We have seen the manner in which the double movement of secularisation and of liberty was effected in the Protestant country; it remains to trace the corresponding developement in the Catholic one.

It was upon the French Protestants that the office which in England was filled by the Puritans naturally devolved. The fact that they were a minority, and often a persecuted minority, gave them a bias in favour of liberty, while at the same time their numbers were sufficiently great to communicate a considerable impulse to public opinion. Unfortunately, however, the extreme arrogance and the persecuting spirit they manifested whenever they rose to power rendered them peculiarly unfit to be the champions of liberty; while at the same time their position as a minority of the nation, governed mainly by religious principles in an era of religious wars, rendered their prevailing spirit profoundly anti-national. Wherever sectarian feeling is keenly felt it proves stronger than patriotism. The repulsion separating men as members of different religions becomes more powerful than the attraction uniting them as children of the same soil, and the maxim that

religion, politically speaking, depends on the liberty of the several States of Europe' (p. 135.) Toland also edited the *Oceana*, and wrote the Lives of Harrington and Milton. But the most eminent avowed English freethinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are those mentioned in the text, with the exception of Gibbon, who sat in Parliament as a Tory.

a man's true country is not that in which he was born but that of his co-religionists, being professed, or at least acted on, treason is easily justified. In the present day, when the fever of theology has happily subsided, Ireland forms an almost solitary example of a nation in which national interests and even national pride are habitually sacrificed to sectarianism; but in the sixteenth century such a sacrifice was general, and although in France at least it was made quite as much by the majority as by the minority, it naturally appeared in the latter case more conspicuous and repulsive. The atrocious persecutions the majority directed against the minority rendered the alienation of the latter from the national sympathies both natural and excusable, but it did not appear so to the persecutors. The majority have therefore usually been able to enlist the patriotic feelings of the multitude against the minority, and this has weakened the political influence of the latter.

In the political teaching of the French Protestants it is easy to detect two distinct currents. Whenever the Pope or the Ultramontane theologians put forward a claim to the power of deposition, the Protestants constituted themselves the champions of loyalty, and endeavoured in this manner to win the favour of the rulers. Thus we find their synods condemning with great solemnity the treatise of Suarez, protesting in the most emphatic language against the disloyalty of the Catholics, and assuring the sovereign in their petitions that they at least recognised no mediate power between the king and the Almighty.[1] If we

[1] Many instances of this are collected by Bianchi (tom. i. pp. 46–84), but the fullest account I have met with is in a very clever anonymous book (written from a strong Catholic

were to judge their opinions by the language of some of their petitions, we might imagine that they were no less favourable to despotism than the Anglicans. But such a judgment would do them great injustice. No body of men ever exhibited a greater alacrity in resisting persecution by force, and, with a few exceptions, the general tone of their theology as of their policy was eminently favourable to liberty. Opinions on these subjects have so completely changed since the seventeenth century, that the defence of the French Protestants is chiefly to be found in the writings of their adversaries; and, according to modern notions, it would be difficult to find a nobler eulogy than is implied in the accusation of one of the ablest of these, who declared that the general tendency of the Protestant writings was always to the effect that 'kings and subjects were reciprocally bound by contract to the performance of certain things in such a manner that if the sovereign failed to perform his promise the subjects were freed from their oath of allegiance, and might engage themselves to new masters.'[1]

The opinions of the French Protestants on these points may be more easily ascertained from their actions than from their writings; and the right of resisting religious persecution was naturally more

point of view, and ascribed by some to an author named Pellison, and by others to Bayle,) called *Avis aux Réfugiez sur leur prochain retour en France*, par M. C. L. A. A. P. D. P. The condemnation of the book of Suarez was by a Synod of Tonneins, in 1614. On the other hand, on the extremely liberal views of Jurieu, who preceded both Sydney and Locke, see Michelet, *Hist. de Louis XIV*, pp. 431-436. The book in which Jurieu especially expressed them is his *Soupirs de la France esclave*.

[1] *Avis aux Réfugiez*, pp. 64, 65 (ed. 1692).

considered than the right of resisting political tyranny. Jurieu strenuously asserted the first right; and although Saurin is said to have taken the opposite view,[1] the numerous rebellions of the Protestants leave no doubt as to their general sentiments. The two most remarkable works bearing upon the secular aspect of the question that issued from this quarter were the 'Franco-Gallia' of Hotman, and the 'Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos' of Junius Brutus.

The first of these was published in 1573. Its author (who had escaped from France to Geneva at the time of the massacre of St. Bartholomew) was one of the most learned lawyers of the day, and the chief advocate of the Protestant view of some of the legal questions that arose about the succession of the crown.[2] The 'Franco-Gallia' is an elaborate attempt to prove that the Crown of France is, by right, not hereditary but elective. The arguments are drawn in part from general considerations about the origin of government, which Hotman attributed to the will of the people,[3] but chiefly from facts in French history. The writer also attempts to show, in an argument that was evidently directed against Catherine de' Medici, that the exclusion of women from the French throne implied, or at least strongly recommended, their exclusion from the regency, and that on every occasion in which they had exercised

[1] Michelet, *Hist. de Louis XIV* (1860), p. 432.

[2] The works of Hotman were collected in three large volumes, in 1600. After the *Franco-Gallia* the best known are the *Brutum Fulmen*, which was written on the occasion of the excommunication of the King of Navarre; and the *Anti-Tribonius*, which was written in opposition to the revival of Roman legislation. Joseph Scaliger said he helped in the composition of the *Franco-Gallia* (*Scaligerana*, art. *Hottomannus*).

[3] *Franco-Gallia*, lib. i. c. 9.

the supreme power disastrous consequences had ensued.[1]

A much more remarkable book was the 'Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos,' which was published about the same time as the 'Franco-Gallia,' and translated into French in 1581, and which, being written with much ability, exercised a very considerable influence. Some have ascribed it, but apparently without reason, to Hotman—others to Linguet or to Parquet. The author, whoever he may be, holds, like Hooker, that the regal authority is, in the first instance, derived from the people, but that notwithstanding this it is held by Divine right. From this consideration he argues that a king is bound by two pacts, on the obser vance of which his legitimacy depends—a pact to God that he will govern according to the divine law, and a pact to the people that he will govern according to their interests.[2] A nation may resist by arms a sovereign who has violated the Divine law, because the first of these pacts is then broken, and also because it is part of the Providential system that subjects should be punished for the crimes of their ruler, which implies that they are bound to prevent them.[3] This last proposition the author maintains at length from the Old Testament. Whenever the king violated the Divine command, some fearful chastisement was inflicted upon the nation, and the chief office of the prophets was to signalise these violations, and to

[1] Lib. i. c. 24. So Knox: 'To promote a woman to beare rule is repugnant to nature, contumelie to God, a thing most contrarious to his reveled will and approved ordinance; and finallie it is the subversion of good order, of all equitie and justice.' (*Monstrous Regiment of Women.*)

[2] *Quæst.* ii.

[3] *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, p. 45 (ed. 1610).

urge the people to resistance. Every page of Jewish history bears witness to this, and at the present day the Jews are dispersed because their ancestors did not snatch Christ from the hands of Pilate. But it is impossible to go so far without advancing a step further; for if the Jewish precedent is to be applied, it is manifest the Divine law is violated not merely by the persecution of truth, but also by the toleration of error. No crime was more constantly denounced or more fiercely punished under the old Dispensation than religious tolerance. No fact is more legibly stamped upon the Jewish writings than that, in the opinion of their authors, a Jewish sovereign who permitted his people to practise unmolested the rites of an idolatry which they preferred was committing a sin. Nor does the author of the book we are considering shrink from the consequence. He quotes, as an applicable precedent, the conduct of the people who at the instigation of Elijah massacred the whole priesthood of Baal, and he maintains that the toleration of an 'impious sacred rite' is a justifiable cause of rebellion.[1]

The question then arose in what manner this resistance was to be organised. And here the writer separates himself clearly from the school of Mariana, for he strongly denies the right of an individual to take the life of a persecutor by way of assassination, however favourable the people might be to the act. Resistance can only be authorised by a council representing the people. In all well-regulated countries a parliament or assembly of some kind exists which may be regarded as representative; and although

[1] *Vindiciæ*, pp. 38–39, 60.

each individual member is less than the king, the council, as a whole, is his superior, and the vote of the majority may depose him.[1] When such a council does not exist it may be extemporised, but the elements should, if possible, be drawn from the aristocracy and the magistrates. Nor is it simply a nation that may thus withdraw its allegiance. The author, evidently with a view to the position of the French Protestants, adds that particular districts or cities, if the inhabitants desire it and if their magistrates consent, may likewise withdraw themselves from their allegiance, and may insist upon the maintenance among them of the worship they believe to be right, and the suppression of that which they believe to be wrong.[2] The principles which were thus urged in favour of rebellion on religious grounds apply, with very little change, to rebellions that are purely political. A king who ruled in opposition to the will of his people had broken the pact that bound him, and had consequently become a tyrant. In the case of a tyrant who had occupied the throne by force against the manifest will of the people, but in this case alone, tyrannicide is lawful, and the examples of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, of Brutus and Cassius, are to be commended. In other cases, however, resistance must first be authorised by a council representing the nation, and consisting of its leading men. Like Hotman, the author contends that all monarchy was originally elective, and he adds that it still so retains its character, that the people may at any time reject the family they have raised to the throne, and that the heir-apparent is no more than a candidate for office.[3]

[1] *Vindiciæ*, p. 45. [2] P. 60. [3] P. 79.

There is one other question treated in this remarkable book, to which I may advert for a moment, because, although not connected with the right of resistance, it throws some light upon the condition of feeling sectarian animosities produced. This question is whether, when the majority of a nation is persecuting the minority, a foreign potentate may interpose by arms to succour his co-religionists. The reply is that it is his imperative duty to do so. If he does not, he is guilty of the blood of the martyrs—he is even worse than the persecutors: for they at least imagine that they are slaying the wicked, while he permits the slaughter of those whom he knows to be the just.

It is not probable that many of the French Protestants would have sanctioned all the propositions of this book, but the principles of which it may be regarded as the concentration were very widely diffused among the members of both creeds, and had no inconsiderable influence in preparing the way for the Revolution. The chief political importance, however, of the religious wars was not so much in the doctrines they produced as in the circumstances under which those doctrines were advocated. Few things contributed more powerfully to the secularisation of politics than the anarchy of opinions, the manifest subordination of principles to interests, that was exhibited on all sides among theologians. A single battle, a new alliance, a change in the policy of the rulers, a prospect of some future triumph, was sufficient to alter the whole tone and complexion of the teachings of a Church. Doctrines concerning the sinfulness of rebellion, which were urged with the most dogmatic certainty and supported by the

most terrific threats, swayed to and fro with each vicissitude of fortune, were adopted or abandoned with the same celerity, curtailed or modified or expanded to meet the passing interests of the hour. They became, as Bayle said, like birds of passage, migrating with every change of climate. In no country and in no Church do we find anything resembling the conduct of those ancient Christians who never advocated passive obedience more strongly than when all their interests were against it. The apostasies were so flagrant, the fluctuations were so rapid, that it was impossible to overlook them, and they continued till the ascendency of theology over politics was destroyed. The keen eye of the great sceptic of the age soon marked the change, and foresaw the issue to which it was leading.[1]

It will probably have struck the reader in perusing the foregoing pages, and it will certainly have struck those who have examined the books that have been referred to, that, in addition to theological interests and traditions, there was a purely secular influence derived from the writings of paganism acting strongly in the direction of liberty. The names that recur most frequently in these writings are those of the

[1] 'Voyez l'horrible impudence de quoi nous pelotons les raisons divines, et combien irréligieusement nous les avons rejetées et reprises selon que la fortune nous a changez de place en ces orages publics. Cette proposition si solennelle, s'il est permis au sujet de se rebeller et armer contre son prince pour la défense de la religion, souvienne-vous en quelles bouches cette année passée l'affirmative d'icelle étoit l'arcboutant d'un parti, la négative de quel autre parti c'étoit l'arcboutant, et oyez à présent de quel quartier vient la voix et instruction de l'une et de l'autre et si les armes bruyent moins pour cette cause que pour celle-là.'—Montaigne, *Essais*, liv. ii. c. 12.

great heroes of antiquity; and whether we examine the works of Mariana or Hooker, or of the author of the 'Vindiciæ,' we are transported into discussions concerning the origin of power that are drawn mainly from the pagan philosophers.[1]

The influence was, I think, of two kinds—the first being chiefly logical, and the second chiefly moral. At the close of the twelfth or in the beginning of the thirteenth century, two professors of the University of Bologna, named Irnerius and Accursius, devoted themselves to exploring manuscripts of some of the Laws of Justinian, which had for centuries been buried in the great library of Ravenna; and they not only revived the knowledge of a legislation that was supposed to have perished, but also formed a school of commentators who did good service in elucidating its character. For a very long period the labours that were thus instituted had but little influence outside the domain of jurisprudence; but at last, in the sixteenth century, a succession of great lawyers arose—of whom Bodin, Cujas, and Alciat were the most remarkable—who applied to the Roman law, intellects of a far higher order, and, among other points, paid great attention to its historic developement. The balance between the popular and the aristocratic rights and the gradual encroachment of the imperial power upon the liberties of

[1] This tendency of the classical writings elicited a burst of extreme indignation from Hobbes: 'Inter rebellionis causas maximas numerari potest librorum politicorum et historicorum quos scripserunt veteres Græci et Romani lectio. . . . . Mihi ergo monarchiis nihil videtur esse damnosius posse, quam permittere ut hujusmodi libri publice doceantur, nisi simul a magistris sapientibus quibus venenum corrigi possit remedia applicentur. Morbum hunc comparari libet cum hydrophobia, &c.' (*Leviathan*, cap. xxix.)

Rome became for about a century favourite subjects of discussion, and naturally produced similar enquiries concerning modern States. From a philosophical investigation of these questions the lawyers passed by an inevitable transition to an examination of the origin of government, a subject which they pursued, from their own point of view, as energetically as the theologians. Bodin, who was probably the ablest of those who devoted themselves to these studies, cannot indeed be regarded as a representative of the democratic tendency; for he strenuously repudiated the notion of a social contract, maintaining the origin of monarchy to be usurpation; he denied that the ruler should be regarded simply as a chief magistrate, and he combated with great force the distinction which Aristotle and the schoolmen had drawn between a king and a tyrant.[1] Hotman, however, in France, and, about a century later, Gronovius and Noodt, who were two of the most eminent Dutch advocates of liberty, based their teaching almost entirely upon these legal researches.[2]

But the principal influence which the pagan writings exercised upon liberty is to be found in the

[1] He tried, however, to establish a distinction of his own —that a king was one who governed according to the law of nature, and a tyrant one who outraged it.

[2] See Noodt *On the Power of Sovereigns*, and Gronovius *On the Royal Law*, both of which were translated into French by Barbeyrac—the first in 1707, and the second in 1714. They were both in the form of lectures delivered near the end of the seventeenth century before the University of Leyden, and are both, I think, rather dismal performances. Noodt was a strenuous advocate of liberty of conscience, and also one of the principal assailants of the theological superstitions about usury. Gronovius is best remembered for his Annotations of Grotius, in which he strongly repudiated the servile political maxims of that writer.

direction they gave to the enthusiasm of Europe. It has no doubt fallen to the lot of many who have come in contact with the great masterpieces of the Greek chisel to experience the sensation of a new perception of beauty which it is the prerogative of the highest works of genius to evoke. A statue we may have often seen with disappointment or indifference, or with a languid and critical admiration, assumes one day a new aspect in our eyes. It is not that we have discovered in it some features that had before escaped our notice; it is not that we have associated with it any definite ideas that can be expressed by words or defended by argument: it is rather a silent revelation of a beauty that had been hidden, the dawn of a new conception of grandeur, almost the creation of another sense. The judgment is raised to the level of the object it contemplates; it is moulded into its image; it is thrilled and penetrated by its power.

Something of this kind took place in Europe as a consequence of the revival of learning. In the middle ages the ascendency of the Church had been so absolute that the whole measure of moral grandeur had been derived from the ecclesiastical annals. The heroism, the self-sacrifice, the humility, the labours of the saints formed the ideal of perfection, and a greatness of a different order could scarcely be imagined. The names of the heroes of antiquity were indeed familiar, their principal achievements were related, and the original writings in which they were recorded were sometimes read, but they fell coldly and lifelessly upon the mind. The chasm that divided the two periods arose not so much from the fact that the heroes of antiquity were pagans,

and therefore, according to the orthodox doctrine, doomed to eternal reprobation, or even from the different direction their heroism had taken, as from the type of character they displayed. The sense of human dignity and the sense of sin, as we have already noticed, are the two opposing sentiments one or other of which may be traced in almost every great moral movement mankind has undergone, and each, when very powerful, produces a moral type altogether different from that which is produced by the other. The first is a proud aspiring tendency, intolerant of every chain, eager in asserting its rights, resenting promptly the slightest wrong, self-confident, disdainful, and ambitious. The second produces a submissive and somewhat cowering tone; it looks habitually downwards, grasps fondly and eagerly at any support which is offered by authority, and in its deep self-distrust seeks, with a passionate earnestness, for some dogmatic system under which it may shelter its nakedness. The first is the almost invariable antecedent and one of the chief efficient causes of political liberty, and the second of theological change. It is true that as theological or political movements advance they often lose their first character, coalesce with other movements, and become the representatives of other tendencies, but in the first instance one or other of these two sentiments may almost always be detected. It was the sense of sin that taught the old Catholic saints to sound the lowest depths of mortification, of self-sacrifice, and of humiliation, that convulsed the mind of Luther in the monastery of Wittenberg, and persuaded him that neither his own good works nor the indulgences of the Pope could avert the anger of the

Almighty, that impelled Wesley and Whitfield to revolt against the frigid moral teaching of their time, and raise once more the banner of Justification by Faith, that urged the first leaders of Tractarianism towards a Church which by authoritative teaching and multiplied absolutions could allay the paroxysms of a troubled conscience.[1] On the other hand, almost every great political revolution that has been successfully achieved has been preceded by a tone of marked self-confidence and pride, manifested alike in philosophy, in general literature, and in religion. When a theological movement has coalesced with a struggle for liberty, it has usually been impregnated with the same spirit. The sense of privilege was much more prominent in the Puritanism of the seventeenth century than the sense of sin, and a fierce rebellion against superstition than humility.[2]

Now the sense of human dignity was the chief moral agent of antiquity, and the sense of sin of mediævalism; and although it is probable that the most splendid actions have been performed by men who were exclusively under the influence of one or other of these sentiments, the concurrence of both is obviously essential to the wellbeing of society, for the first is the especial source of the heroic, and the second of the religious, virtues. The first produces the qualities of a patriot, and the second the qualities of a saint. In

[1] See some striking remarks on this in Froude's *Nemesis of Faith*, pp. 160, 161.

[2] What, for example, could be more opposed to the spirit of the modern Evangelical party, which is supposed by some to represent the Puritanism of the 17th century, than those noble lines of the great poet of the latter?—

'Mortals! who would follow me,
Love virtue, she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime!
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.'—*Comus*.

the middle ages, the saintly type being the standard of perfection, the heroic type was almost entirely unappreciated. The nearest approach to it was exhibited by the Crusader, whose valour was nevertheless all subordinated to superstition, and whose whole career was of the nature of a penance. The want of sympathy between the two periods was so great that for the space of many centuries, during which Latin was the habitual language of literature, the great classical works scarcely exercised any appreciable influence. Sometimes men attempted to mould them into the image of the mediæval conceptions, and by the wildest and most fantastic allegories to impart to them an interest they did not otherwise possess. Thus Troy, according to one monkish commentator, signified Hell, Helen the human soul, Paris the devil, Ulysses Christ, and Achilles the Holy Ghost. Actæon torn by his own dogs was an emblem of the sufferings of Christ; the Rubicon was an image of Baptism.[1] It was not till the revival of learning had been considerably advanced that a perception of the nobility of the heroic character dawned upon men's minds. Then for the first time the ecclesiastical type was obscured, a new standard and aspiration appeared; and popular enthusiasm, taking a new direction, achieved that political liberty which once created, intensified the tendency that produced it.

We cannot have a better example of this passionate aspiration towards political liberty than is furnished by the treatise 'On Voluntary Servitude,' or, as it

[1] Cibrario, *Economia Politica del Medio Evo*, vol. ii. p. 247 (2nd ed.). This tendency was turned to ridicule by Ulrich von Hutten in a very witty but very profane adaptation of the Fables of Ovid to the Christian history (*Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* [London, 1689], pp. 103–107), and also by Rabelais.

was afterwards called, the 'Contre-un'[1] of La Boétie. This writer, who was one of the most industrious labourers in the classical field, never pauses to examine the origin of government, or to adjudicate between conflicting theologians; but he assumes at once, as a fact that is patent to the conscience, that the subordination of the interests of a nation to the caprices of a man is an abuse, and that the great heroes of antiquity are deserving of imitation. The 'Contre-un' is throughout one fiery appeal—so fiery indeed that Montaigne, who published all the other works of La Boétie, refused to publish this—to the people to cast off their oppressors. It reads like the declamations of the revolutionists of the eighteenth century. 'Wretched and insensate people,' writes the author, 'enamoured of your misery and blind to your interests, you suffer your property to be pillaged, your fields devastated, your houses stripped of their goods, and all this by one whom you have yourselves raised to power, and whose dignity you maintain with your lives! He who crushes you has but two eyes, but two hands, but one body. All that he has more than you comes from you. Yours are the many eyes that spy your acts, the many hands that strike you, the many feet that trample you in the dust: all the power with which he injures you is your own. From indignities that the beasts themselves would not endure you can free yourselves by simply willing it. Resolve to serve no more, and you are free. Withdraw your support from the Colossus that crushes you,

[1] The name was given during the life of Montaigne, who praised it. (*Essais*, liv. i. c. 27.) La Boétie, unfortunately, died when only in his thirty-second year, and nearly all his works appear to have been posthumous. They have all been republished at Paris, by Léon Fougère, in 1846.

and it will crumble in the dust. . . . . Think of the battles of Miltiades, of Leonidas, and of Themistocles, which, after two thousand years, are as fresh in the minds of men as though they were of yesterday; for they were the triumphs not so much of Greece as of liberty. . . . . All other goods men will labour to obtain, but to liberty alone they are indifferent, though where it is not every evil follows, and every blessing loses its charm. . . . . Yet we were all moulded in the same die, all born in freedom as brothers, born too with a love of liberty which nothing but our vices has effaced.'

During the last century language of this kind has by constant repetition lost so much of its force that we can scarcely realise the emotions it kindled when it possessed the freshness of novelty, and in a nation convulsed by the paroxysms of civil war. The French Protestants in 1578 adopted the 'Contre-un' as one of the most effectual means of arousing the people to resistance,[1] and as late as 1836 Lamennais made its republication the first measure of his democratic crusade. In the history of literature it will always occupy a prominent place on account of the singular beauty of its language, while in the history of Rationalism it is remarkable as one of the clearest illustrations of the tendency of the classical writings to foster and at the same time to secularise the spirit of liberty.

Owing to the influences I have endeavoured to trace, the ascendency theology had so long exercised

[1] It appeared for the first time, together with the *Franco-Gallia*, in a seditious book called *Mémoires de l'estat de France sous Charles IX.* See *Les Historiettes de Tallemant des Reaux* (ed. 1834), tom. i. p. 395.

over politics was during the religious wars materially weakened, while at the same time the aspiration towards liberty was greatly strengthened. During the comparative torpor that followed the Peace of Westphalia, and still more after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the struggle was for a time suspended; and it was not till near the close of the eighteenth century that the question of the rights of nations reappeared prominently in France—this time, however, not under the auspices of the theologians, but of the freethinkers. But, before reviewing the principles that were then urged, it is necessary to notice for a moment the chief causes that were preparing the people for liberty, and without which no arguments and no heroism could have triumphed.

The first of these was the increase of wealth. Whatever may be the case with small communities and under special circumstances, it is certain that, as a general rule, large masses of people can only enjoy political liberty when the riches of the country have considerably increased. In the early periods of civilisation, when capital is very scanty, and when, owing to the absence of machines and of commerce, the results of labour are extremely small, slavery in one form or another is the inevitable condition of the masses. The abject poverty in which they live casts them helplessly upon the few who are wealthy; wages sink to a point that is barely sufficient for the sustenance of life, and social progress becomes impossible. 'If the hammer and the shuttle could move themselves,' said Aristotle, 'slavery would be unnecessary,' and machinery having virtually fulfilled the condition, the predicted result has followed.[1] The worst and

[1] See some very good remarks on this in Chevalier, *Lettres sur l'Organisation de l'travail* (1848), p. 17.

most degrading forms of labour being performed by machinery, production and consequently capital have been immensely increased, and, progress becoming possible, a middle class has been formed. Commerce not only gives an additional development to this class, but also forms a bond of union connecting the different parts of the country. The roads that are formed for the circulation of wealth become the channels of the circulation of ideas, and render possible that simultaneous action upon which all liberty depends.

The next great cause of liberty was the increase of knowledge. And here again we may discern the evidence of that inexorable fatality which for so many centuries doomed mankind alike to superstition and to slavery, until the great inventions of the human intellect broke the chain. When we hear men dilating upon the degrading superstitions of Catholicism, marvelling how a creed that is so full of gross and material conceptions could win belief, and denouncing it as an apostasy and an error, it is sufficient to say that for 1,500 years after the establishment of the Christian religion it was intellectually and morally impossible that any religion that was not material and superstitious could have reigned over Europe. Protestantism could not possibly have existed without a general diffusion of the Bible, and that diffusion was impossible until after the two inventions of paper and of printing. As long as the material of books was so expensive that it was deemed necessary to sacrifice thousands of the ancient manuscripts in order to cover the parchment with new writing, as long as the only way of covering those parchments was by the slow and laborious process of transcription, books,

and therefore the knowledge of reading, were necessarily confined to an infinitesimal fraction of the community. Pictures and other material images, which a Council of Arras well called the 'Book of the Ignorant,' were then the chief means of religious instruction, not simply because oral instruction without the assistance of books was manifestly insufficient, but also because, in a period when the intellectual discipline of reading is unknown, the mind is incapable of grasping conceptions that are not clothed in a pictorial form. To those who will observe, on the one hand, how invariably the mediæval intellect materialised every department of knowledge it touched, and on the other hand how manifestly the peculiar tenets of Catholicism are formed either by the process of materialising the intellectual and moral conceptions of Christianity or else by legitimate deductions from those tenets when materialised—to those who still further observe how every great theological movement, either of progress or of retrogression, has been preceded by a corresponding change in the intellectual condition of society, it will appear evident that nothing short of a continued miracle could have produced a lasting triumph of Christian ideas except under some such form as Catholicism presents. It was no doubt possible that small communities like the Waldenses, shut out from the general movement of the age, inspired by very strong enthusiasm, and under the constant supervision of zealous pastors, might in some small degree rise above the prevailing materialism; but when we remember how readily nations, considered as wholes, always yield to the spirit of the time, and how extremely little the generality of men strive against the natural bias of their minds, it will easily

be conceived that the great mass of men must have inevitably gravitated to materialism. When under such circumstances a spiritual faith exists, it exists only as the appanage of the few, and can exercise no influence or control over the people.

But while superstition is thus the inevitable and therefore the legitimate condition of an early civilisation, the same causes that make it necessary render impossible the growth of political liberty. Neither the love of freedom nor the capacity of self-government can exist in a great nation that is plunged in ignorance. Political liberty was in ancient times almost restricted to cities like Athens and Rome, where public life, and art, and all the intellectual influences that were concentrated in a great metropolis, could raise the people to an exceptional elevation. In the middle ages servitude was mitigated by numerous admirable institutions, most of which emanated from the Church; but the elements of self-government could only subsist in countries that were so small that the proceedings of the central government came under the immediate cognisance of the whole people. Elsewhere the chief idea that was attached to liberty was freedom from a foreign yoke. It was only by the slow and difficult penetration of knowledge to the masses that a movement like that of the eighteenth century became possible; and we may distinctly trace the steps of its evolution through a long series of preceding centuries. The almost simultaneous introduction into Europe from the East of cotton-paper by the Greeks and by the Moors, the invention of rag-paper at the end of the tenth century, the extension of the area of instruction by the substitution of universities for monasteries as the centres of educa-

tion, the gradual formation of modern languages, the invention of printing in the middle of the fifteenth century, the stimulus given to education by the numerous controversies the Reformation forced upon the attention of all classes, the additional inducement to learn to read arising among Protestants from the position assigned to the Bible, and in a less degree among Catholics from the extraordinary popularity of the Imitation of Thomas A'Kempis, the steady reduction in the price of books as the new art was perfected, the abandonment of a dead language as the vehicle of instruction, the simplification of style and arguments which brought knowledge down to the masses, the sceptical movement which diverted that knowledge from theological to political channels, were all among the antecedents of the Revolution. When knowledge becomes so general that a large proportion of the people take a lively and constant interest in the management of the State, the time is at hand when the bounds of the Constitution will be enlarged.

A third great revolution favourable to liberty is to be found in the history of the art of war. In the early stages of civilisation military achievements are, next to religion, the chief source of dignity, and the class which is most distinguished in battle is almost necessarily the object of the most profound respect. Before the invention of gunpowder, a horseman in armour being beyond all comparison superior to a foot-soldier, the whole stress of battle fell upon the cavalry, who belonged exclusively to the upper classes—in the first instance because the great expense of the equipment could only be met by the rich, and in the next place because express laws excluded plebeians from

its ranks. It is, however, well worthy of notice that in this respect the position of the English was exceptional. Although St. George, who was the object of extreme reverence throughout the middle ages as the patron saint of cavalry, was also the patron saint of England, the skill of the English archers was so great that they rapidly rose to European fame, and obtained a position which in other countries belonged exclusively to the horsemen. In all the old battles the chivalry of France and the yeomen of England were the most prominent figures; and this distinction, trivial as it may now appear, had probably a considerable influence over the history of opinions.

With this exception, the ascendency of the cavalry in the middle ages was unquestionable, but it was not altogether undisputed; and it is curious to trace from a very distant period the slow rise of the infantry accompanying the progress of democracy. The Flemish burghers brought this force to considerable perfection, and in the battle of Courtray their infantry defeated the cavalry opposed to them. A similar achievement was performed by the Swiss infantry in the battle of Morgarten. The French had always treated their own foot-soldiers with extreme contempt; but Crécy and Poitiers having been mainly won by the English archers, a slight revulsion of feeling took place, and great though not very successful efforts were made to raise a rival corps. For some time after the battle of Poitiers all games except archery were prohibited in France. More than once, too, in their combats with the English, the French cavalry were compelled to dismount and endure what they conceived the degradation of fighting on foot, and the same practice was frequent among the free-lances of

Italy under the leadership of Sir John Hawkswood and of Carmagnola.

The invention of gunpowder, as soon as firearms had acquired some degree of excellence, seriously shook the ascendency of the cavalry. The mounted soldier was no longer almost invulnerable by the foot-soldier, or his prowess decisive in battle. Yet, notwithstanding this change, the social distinction between the two branches of the army which chivalry [1] had instituted continued; the cavalry still represented the upper and the infantry the lower classes, and in France the nobles alone had a right to enter the former. The comparative depression of the military importance of the cavalry had therefore the effect of transferring in a measure the military prestige from the nobles to the people. For some time the balance trembled very evenly between the two forces, until the invention of the bayonet by Vauban gave the infantry a decided superiority, revolutionised the art of war, and thereby influenced the direction of enthusiasm.[2]

The last general tendency I shall mention was produced by the discoveries of political economy. Liberty

[1] Chivalry (*cheval*).

[2] On the earlier part of the history of the comparative importance of cavalry and infantry, see the very clear account in a work of the present French Emperor, *Du Passé et de l'Avenir de l'Artillerie*; and on the later part, and especially on the influence of Vauban, the brilliant sketch of the revolutions in the art of war in the last volume of Thiers' *Hist. de l'Empire*. M. Thiers has made some striking remarks on the effects of the sceptical movement of the eighteenth century upon war—disturbing the old traditions of the art, and culminating in the innovations of Napoleon. The democratic importance of the ascendency of infantry has been noticed by Condorcet, *Tableau de l'Esprit humain*, p. 144. Condorcet, however, has ascribed that ascendency exclusively to gunpowder. See, too, Cibrario, *Economie Publica del Medio Evo*, tom. i. pp. 334, 335.

cannot be attained without a jealous restriction of the province of government, and indeed may be said in a great measure to consist of such a restriction. The process since the Reformation has passed through two distinct stages. The first, which was effected mainly by the diffusion of Rationalism, was the triumph of tolerance, by which the vast field of speculative opinions was withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the civil power. The second, which was effected by political economy, was free-trade, by which the evil of the interference of government with commercial transactions was proved. This last proposition, which was one of the most important, was also one of the earliest of the achievements of political economists, for it was ardently professed by the French school nearly twenty years before the publication of the 'Wealth of Nations;' and as the catastrophe of Law and the ministerial position of Turgot directed public opinion in France very earnestly towards economical questions, it exercised an extensive influence. Many who were comparatively impervious to the more generous enthusiasm of liberty became by these enquiries keenly sensible of the evil of an all-directing government, and anxious to abridge its power.[1]

There were of course innumerable special circumstances growing out of the policy of the French rulers, which accelerated or retarded the advance or influenced the character of the Revolution. The foregoing pages have no pretension to be a complete summary of its antecedents, but they may serve to show that a revolutionary movement of some kind was the normal result of the tendencies of the age,

[1] This has been noticed by many political economists, but by no one more ably than by Mr. Buckle.

that its chief causes are to be sought entirely outside the discussions of political philosophers, and that the rise of great republican writers, the principles they enunciated, and the triumph of their arguments were all much more the consequences than the causes of the democratic spirit. In other words, these men were rather representative than creative. But for the preceding movement they would never have appeared, or, at least, would never have triumphed, although when they appeared they undoubtedly modified and in a measure directed the movement that produced them. The change must necessarily have taken place, but it was a question of great importance into whose hands its guidance was to fall.

If we take a broad view of the history of liberty since the establishment of Christianity, we find that the ground of conflict was at first personal and at a later period political liberty, and that in the earlier stage the Catholic Church was the special representative of progress. In the transition from slavery to serfdom and in the transition from serfdom to liberty she was the most zealous, the most unwearied, and the most efficient agent. The same thing may be said of the earliest period of the political evolution. As long as the condition of society was such that an enlarged political liberty was impossible, as long as the object was not so much to produce freedom as to mitigate servitude, the Church was still the champion of the people. The balance of power produced by the numerous corporations she created or sanctioned, the reverence for tradition resulting from her teaching which perpetuated a network of unwritten customs with the force of public law, the dependence of the civil upon the ecclesiastical power, and the rights of

excommunication and deposition, had all contributed to lighten the pressure of despotism. After a time, however, the intellectual progress of society destroyed the means which the Church possessed for mitigating servitude, and at the same time raised the popular demand for liberty to a point that was perfectly incompatible with her original teaching. The power of the Papal censure was so weakened that it could scarcely be reckoned upon as a political influence, and all the complicated checks and counter-checks of mediæval society were swept away. On the other hand the struggle for political liberty in its widest sense,—the desire to make the will of the people the basis of the government,—the conviction that a nation has a right to alter a government that opposes its sentiments,—has become the great characteristic of modern politics. Experience has shown that wherever intellectual life is active and unimpeded a political fermentation will ensue, and will issue in a movement having for its object the repudiation of the Divine right of kings, and the recognition of the will of the people as the basis of the government. The current has been flowing in this direction since the Reformation, but has advanced with peculiar celerity since the Peace of Westphalia, for since that event the desire of securing a political ascendency for any religious sect has never been a preponderating motive with politicians. With this new spirit the Catholic Church cannot possibly harmonise. It is contrary to her genius, to her traditions, and to her teaching Resting upon the principle of authority, she instinctively assimilates with those forms of government that most foster the habits of mind she inculcates. Intensely dogmatic in her teaching, she naturally en-

deavours to arrest by the hand of power the circulation of what she believes to be error, and she therefore allies herself with the political system under which alone such suppression is possible. Asserting as the very basis of her teaching the binding authority of the past, she cannot assent to political doctrines which are, in fact, a direct negation of the uniform teaching of the ancient Church.[1] In the midst of the fierce struggle of the sixteenth century isolated theologians might be permitted without censure to propound doctrines of a seditious nature, but it was impossible ultimately to overlook the fact that the modern secularisation of the basis of authority and the modern latitude given to a discontented people are directly contrary to the teaching of the Fathers, and extend far beyond the teaching of the mediæval theologians.[2] The fact that modern opinions have been in a measure evolved from the speculations of the schoolmen, or

[1] As a distinguished Anglican divine of our own day has put it, 'It is idle, and worse than idle, to attempt to restrict and explain away this positive command ("Resist not evil"), and the Christian Church has always upheld it in its full extent. *'With one uniform unhesitating voice it has proclaimed the duty of passive obedience.'* (Sewell, *Christian Politics*, ch. x.)

[2] I have already referred to the bull of Gregory XVI. attesting this contradiction. I may add the following admission of a writer who may be regarded as one of the principal representatives of the Ultramontane party, which has always been the most liberal in politics:—'Quoique nous tombions d'accord que la source ou l'origine de la puissance publique réside dans la multitude, nous nions cependant que la puissance publique étant une fois transférée au prince, le peuple conserve toujours sur lui un droit de souveraineté. Nous disons, au contraire, qu'il ne lui reste plus dès lors que le devoir d'obéir, et qu'il n'existe qu'un cas où il puisse se soustraire à cette obéissance, comme en conviennent les plus ardents défenseurs de la puissance royale, savoir, celui où le prince deviendrait l'ennemi public et déclaré de tout son peuple, et où il chercherait à détruire la société civile.' (Bianchi tom. i. p. 84.)

that the schoolmen were the liberals of their time, though important in the judgment of the rationalist, is of no weight in the eyes of those who assert the finality of the teaching of the past.

The natural incapacity of Catholicism to guide the democratic movement had in the eighteenth century been aggravated by the extremely low ebb to which it had fallen, both intellectually and morally. Nearly all the greatest French intellects of the seventeenth century were warmly attached to Catholicism; all those of the eighteenth century were opposed to it. The Church, therefore, like every retrogressive institution in a progressive age, cast herself with more than common zeal into the arms of power, and on every occasion showed herself the implacable enemy of toleration. In 1780, but a few years before the explosion that shattered the ecclesiastical system of France, the assembly of the French clergy thought it necessary solemnly to deplore and condemn the partial tolerance that had been accorded to the French Protestants, and to petition the king that no further privileges might be granted them. Such a Church was manifestly identified with despotism, and having repeatedly asserted the evil of toleration she had no right to complain when the Revolutionists treated her according to her principles.[1]

Catholicism having thus become the representative of despotism, and French Protestantism having sunk into insignificance, the guidance of the democratic movement necessarily passed into the hands of the

[1] See, for some striking evidence of these sentiments, the *Discours par un Ministre patriote sur le projet d'accorder l'état civil aux Protestants*, by the Abbé de L'Enfert (Paris, 1787).

freethinkers. In the earlier stages of the movement, when liberty was evolved from the religious wars, they had usually stood aloof. Thus Faustus Socinus had predicted that the seditious doctrines by which the Protestants supported their cause would lead to the dissolution of society, and in denouncing them he especially singled out for condemnation the noble struggle of the Dutch against Spain.[1] Montaigne, though Buchanan had been his tutor and la Boétie one of the most intimate of his friends, always leaned strongly towards political conservatism. His disciple Charron went still further, and distinctly asserted the doctrine of passive obedience.[2] Bayle too exerted all his influence in discouraging the revolutionary tenets of Jurieu.[3] Nor was there anything extraordinary in this, for the aspect Europe presented in their time might well have appalled any spectator who was exempt from the prevailing fanaticism. All the bonds of cohesion upon which the political organisation depended were weakened or destroyed. The spirit of private judgment had descended to those who by ignorance or long servitude were totally

[1] Bayle, *Dict.*, art. *Faustus Socinus*, Remarque c.

[2] *La Sagesse*, p. iii.

[3] Many have ascribed the *Avis aux Réfugiez* to Bayle. The charge, however, seems (as far as I know) destitute of external evidence, and considering the great zeal with which Bayle threw himself into the defence of the Calvinists when they were attacked by Maimbourg, is rather improbable. Arguments of style are very untrustworthy, because a great writer always produces many imitators, and Bayle's style was by no means difficult to imitate. However, Bayle's aversion to democratic theories pervades all his works, and Hallam says the presumption is strongly in favour of his having written the *Avis*, while Gibbon and Mackintosh speak of it as certainly his. Voltaire, as is well known, has a far deeper stain upon his memory —a dark damning stain which all his splendid services can never efface: he applauded the partition of Poland.

incapable of self-government, and it had lashed their passions to the wildest fury. Patriotism seemed to have almost vanished from Christendom. Neither Catholics nor Protestants deemed it the least disgraceful to call down a foreign invasion upon their land, to trample its interests in the dust, and to avow the warmest sympathy for its enemies. Religion, which had so long formed the basis of order, inspired the combatants with the fiercest hatred, and transformed every vice into a virtue. While a pope was causing medals to be struck in honour of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and enjoining Vasari to paint the scene upon the walls of the Vatican; while the murderer of Henry III. was extolled as a martyr, and writings defending his act were scattered broadcast among the people, it was not surprising that the freethinkers, who stood apart from the conflict, should have sought at any risk to consolidate the few remaining elements of order. But in the eighteenth century their position and the circumstances that surrounded them were both changed; and the writings of Rousseau and of his disciples proved the trumpet-blast of that great revolution which shattered the political system of France, and the influence of which is even now vibrating to the furthest limits of civilisation.

Assuredly no part of this great change is due to any original discoveries of Rousseau, though his personal influence was very great, and his genius peculiarly fitted for the position he occupied. He was one of those writers who are eminently destitute of the judgment that enables men without exaggeration to discriminate between truth and falsehood, and yet eminently endowed with that logical faculty

which enables them to defend the opinions they have embraced. No one plunged more recklessly into paradox, or supported those paradoxes with more consummate skill. At the same time the firmness with which he grasped and developed general principles, and that wonderful fusion of passion and argument which constitutes the pre-eminent beauty of his style, gave his eloquence a transcendent power in a revolutionary age. Nothing is more curious than to observe how the revolt against the empire of conventionalities of which he was the apostle penetrated into all parts of French society, revolutionising even those which seemed most remote from his influence. It was shown in fashionable assemblies in a disregard for social distinctions, for decorations, and for attire that had for centuries been unknown in France. It was shown in the theatre, where Talma, at the instigation of the great revolutionary painter David, banished from the French stage the custom of representing the heroes of Greece and Rome with powdered wigs and in the garb of the courtiers of Versailles, and founded a school of acting which made an accurate imitation of nature the first condition of excellence.[1] It was shown even in the country houses, where the mathematical figures, the long formal alleys arranged with architectural symmetry, and the trees dwarfed and trimmed into fantastic shapes, which

[1] The first step, according to Madame Fusil (*Souvenirs d'une Actrice*, pp. 27–54), in this direction was taken by an actress named Madame Saint-Hubert, who discarded powder and took the ancient sculptures as her model; but it was the genius of Talma, warmly seconded by the antiquarians, by the revolutionists, and especially by the Girondins, that finally vanquished the prevailing prejudice. The incongruity of the old costume has, I think, been exaggerated: it was well suited to the Greeks—of Racine.

Le Nôtre had made the essential elements of a French garden, were suddenly discarded and replaced by the wild and irregular beauties that Kent had made popular in England.[1] But though the character and the original genius of Rousseau were stamped upon every feature of his time, the doctrines of the 'Social Contract' are in all essentials borrowed from Locke and from Sydney, and where they diverge from their models they fall speedily into absurdity.[2] The true causes of their mighty influence are to be found in the condition of society. Formerly they had been advocated with a view to special political exigencies, or to a single country, or to a single section of society. For the first time, in the eighteenth century, they penetrated to the masses of the people, stirred them to their lowest depths, and produced an upheaving that was scarcely less general than that of the Reformation. The history of the movement was like that of the enchanted well in the Irish legend, which lay for centuries shrouded in darkness in the midst of a gorgeous city, till some careless hand left open the door that had enclosed it, and the morning sunlight flashed upon its waters. Immediately it arose responsive to the beam; it burst the barriers that had confined it; it submerged the city that had surrounded it; and its resistless waves, chanting wild music to heaven, rolled over the temples and over the palaces of the past.

There is no fact more remarkable in this movement

[1] See a singularly curious essay on the history of Gardens in Vitet, *Études sur l'Histoire de l'Art*. Le Nôtre laid out the gardens of Versailles for Louis XIV.

[2] As, for example, when it is contended that a people with representive government are slaves, except during the period of the elections. (*Contrat social*, liv. iii. ch. xv.)

than the manner in which it has in many countries risen to the position of a religion—that is to say, of an unselfish enthusiasm uniting vast bodies of men in aspiration towards an ideal, and proving the source of heroic virtues. It is always extremely important to trace the direction in which the spirit of self-sacrifice is moving, for upon the intensity of that spirit depends the moral elevation of an age, and upon its course the religious future of the world. It once impelled the warriors of Europe to carry ruin and desolation to the walls of Jerusalem, to inundate the plains of Palestine with the blood of slaughtered thousands, and to purchase by unparalleled calamities some relics for the devotion of the pilgrim. It once convulsed Europe with religious wars, suspended all pacific operations, and paralysed all secular interests in order to secure the ascendency of a church, or of a creed. It once drove tens of thousands into the retirement of the monasteries; induced them to macerate their bodies, and to mortify their affections; to live in sackcloth and ashes, in cold and poverty and privations, that by such means they might attain their reward. These things have now passed away. The crusader's sword has long been shattered, and his achievements have been idealised by the poet and the novelist. The last wave of the religious wars that swept over so many lands has subsided into a calm that is broken only by the noisy recriminations of a few angry polemics. The monastic system and the conceptions from which it grew are fading rapidly before the increasing day. Celibacy, voluntary poverty, and voluntary subjection, were the three subjects which Giotto painted over the high altar of Assisi as the distinctive characteristics of the saint—the efforts of

self-sacrifice that lead to the beatitude of heaven. All of them have now lost their power. Even that type of heroic grandeur which the ancient missionary exhibited, though eulogised and revered, is scarcely reproduced. The spirit of self-sacrifice still exists, but it is to be sought in other fields—in a boundless philanthropy growing out of affections that are common to all religions, and above all in the sphere of politics. Liberty and not theology is the enthusiasm of the nineteenth century. The very men who would once have been conspicuous saints are now conspicuous revolutionists, for while their heroism and their disinterestedness are their own, the direction these qualities take is determined by the pressure of their age.

If we analyse the democratic ideal which is exercising so wide an influence, we find that it consists of two parts—a rearrangement of the map of Europe on the principle of the rights of nationalities, and a strong infusion of the democratic element into the government of each State. The recognition of some universal principle of political right powerful enough to form a bond of lasting concord has always been a favourite dream with statesmen and philosophers. Hildebrand sought it in the supremacy of the spiritual power, and in the consequent ascendency of the moral law; Dante in the fusion of all European States into one great empire, presided over in temporal matters by the Cæsars and in spiritual by the Popes; Grotius and Henry IV. of France, in a tribunal like the Amphictyonic assembly of ancient Greece, deciding with supreme authority international differences; diplomacy in artificial combinations, and especially in the system of the balance of power.

The modern doctrine of the rights of nationalities could not possibly have attained any great importance till the present century—in the first place because it is only after the wide diffusion of education that the national sentiment acquires the necessary strength, concentration, and intelligence, and in the next place because the influence of the selfish side of human nature was hostile to it. The conceptions that the interests of adjoining nations are diametrically opposed, that wealth can only be gained by displacement, and that conquest is therefore the chief path to progress, were long universal; but during the last century political economy has been steadily subverting them, and has already effected so much that it scarcely seems unreasonable to conclude that the time will come when a policy of territorial aggrandisement will be impossible. At the same time the extension of free trade has undoubtedly a tendency to effect the disintegration of great heterogeneous empires by destroying the peculiar advantages of colonies and of conquered territory; while railways and increasing knowledge weaken national antipathies and facilitate the political agglomeration of communities with a common race, language, and geographical position. The result of all this is that motives of self-interest do not oppose themselves as powerfully as of old to the recognition of territorial limits defined by the wishes of the people. And this is peculiarly important, because not only does interest, as distinguished from passion, gain a greater empire with advancing civilisation, but passion itself is mainly guided by its power. If, indeed, we examine only the proximate causes of European wars, they present the aspect of a perfect chaos, and the immense

majority might be ascribed to isolated causes or to passing ebullitions of national jealousy. But if we examine more closely, we find that a deepseated aversion produced by general causes had long preceded and prepared the explosion. The great majority of wars during the last 1,000 years may be classified under three heads—wars produced by opposition of religious belief, wars resulting from erroneous economical notions either concerning the balance of trade or the material advantages of conquest, and wars resulting from the collision of the two hostile doctrines of the Divine right of kings and the rights of nations. In the first instance knowledge has gained a decisive, and in the second almost a decisive, victory. Whether it will ever render equally impossible political combinations that outrage national sentiments is one of the great problems of the future. This much at least is certain, that the progress of the movement has profoundly and irrevocably impaired the force of treaties and of diplomatic arrangements as the regulating principles of Europe.

But whatever may be thought on these subjects, it is at least certain that the movement we have traced has become a great moral influence in Europe, and, like many others, exhibits a striking synthesis of the distinctive elements of two different civilisations. The spirit of patriotism has under its influence assumed a position scarcely less prominent than in antiquity, while at the same time, by a transformation to which almost all the influences of modern society have concurred, it has lost its old exclusiveness without altogether losing its identity, and has assimilated with a sentiment of universal fraternity. The sympathy between great bodies of men was never so

strong, the stream of enthusiasm never flowed in so broad a current as at present; and in the democratic union of nations we find the last and highest expression of the Christian ideal of the brotherhood of mankind.

Nor is it simply in the international aspect of democracy that we trace this influence; it is found no less clearly in the changes that have been introduced into internal legislation and social life. The political merits of democracy I do not now discuss, but no one at least can question the extent to which legislation has of late years been modified in favour of the lower classes, the sympathy and even deference that has been shown to their wants, the rapid obliteration of the lines of class-divisions, and the ever-increasing tendency to amalgamation based upon political equality and upon enlarged sympathy.

It is thus that amid the transformation or dissolution of intellectual dogmas the great moral principles of Christianity continually reappear, acquiring new power in the lapse of ages, and influencing the type of each succeeding civilisation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF RATIONALISM.

The history of labour is only second in importance to the history of knowledge. The estimate in which industry is held, the principles by which it is regulated, and the channels in which it is directed, not merely determine the material prosperity of nations, but also invariably contribute to the formation of a type of character, and in consequence to a modification of opinions. In the course of the present work I have more than once had occasion to refer to the influence of the industrial spirit upon Rationalism, but I have thought it advisable to reserve its full discussion for a separate chapter, in which the relation between the two evolutions will be clearly manifested, and the importance of commerce both as a disintegrating and constructive agent will be established.

If we examine from an industrial point of view the old civilisation, which was sinking rapidly into dissolution when Christianity arose, we shall at once perceive that slavery was the central fact upon which it rested. Whenever, in a highly-organised society, this institution is prominent, it will impart a special cast to the national character, and will in some respects invert the normal conditions of developement. For labour, being identified with ignominy, will

become distasteful to all classes, and wealth will be speedily accumulated in the hands of a few. Where slavery exists there is no middle class, little or no manufacturing or commercial enterprise. The slave-owner possesses the means of rapidly amassing wealth, while the freeman who is not a slaveowner, being shut out from nearly every path of industry, and being convinced that labour is a degradation, will be both demoralised and impoverished. At the same time a strong military spirit will usually be encouraged, both because the energies of men find no other sphere of action, and because in such a condition of society conquest is the chief path to wealth. In some respects the consequences of all this will appear very fascinating. A high military enthusiasm being engendered, the nation which cherishes slavery will usually prove victorious in its conflicts with the commercial communities around it. It will produce many great warriors, many splendid examples of military devotion. A combination of the high mettle of the soldier and of a chivalrous contempt for trade and the trading spirit will impart an aristocratic and refined tone to the national manners, while the national intellect will be diverted from utilitarian inventions and pursuits, and will be concentrated on sublime speculations and works of beauty. But as soon as the first energy of the conquering spirit has passed away, the hollowness of such a civilisation becomes apparent. The increase of wealth, which in a free nation strengthens the middle classes and gives a new impulse to commercial enterprise, in a slave nation produces only luxury and vice; and the habit of regarding multitudes as totally destitute of rights, combined with the military spirit that is general,

gives that vice a character of the most odious ferocity.[1]

It is of course possible that the intervention of other influences may modify this type of character, and may retard and in some degree prevent the downfall it produces, but in as far as slavery is predominant in so far will these tendencies be displayed. In the ancient civilisation they were developed to the full extent. From a very early period the existence of slavery had produced, both in Greece and Rome, a strong contempt for commerce and for manual labour, which was openly professed by the ablest men, and which harmonised well with their disdain for the more utilitarian aspects of science. Among the Bœotians those who had defiled themselves with commerce were excluded for ten years from all offices in the State. Plato pronounced the trade of a shopkeeper to be a degradation to a freeman, and he wished it to be punished as a crime. Aristotle, who asserted so strongly the political claims of the middle classes, declared, nevertheless, that in a perfect State no citizen should exercise any mechanical art. Xenophon and Cicero were both of the same opinion. Augustus condemned a senator to death because he had debased his rank by taking part in a manufacture. The single form of labour that was held in honour was agriculture; and in the earlier and simpler periods of the national history, while slaves were still few and luxury was unknown, this pursuit proved a sufficient vent for the pacific energies of the people. But when the number and

[1] The effects of slavery upon character have lately been treated with very remarkable ability in Cairnes' *Slave Power*. See also Storch, *Écon. politique*, tom. v., and Ch. Comte, *Traité de Législation*, liv. v.

wealth of the population had been multiplied, when a long series of victories had greatly increased the multitude of slaves, and when the political privileges of a Roman citizen had been widely extended, all classes flocked within the walls, the surrounding country fell entirely into the hands of the aristocracy, and either remained uncultivated or was cultivated only by slaves,[1] and the task of supplying the overgrown city with corn devolved chiefly upon the colonies. Within the city a vast half-military population, sufficiently powerful to control the government and intent only upon enjoyment, paralysed the energies of the empire, and destroyed every trace of its ancient purity. 'Bread and the games of the circus' was the constant demand; every other consideration was sacrificed to grant it; and industry, in all its departments, was relinquished to the slaves.

If we compare the conditions of the ancient with that of the modern slaves, we shall find that they were in some respects profoundly different. The modern slave-trade has been carried on upon a scale and with circumstances of atrocity little known to the ancients, nor was there in antiquity the difference of race and colour that now prevents a fusion of the free and the enslaved classes. Aristotle, the greatest of all the advocates of slavery, recommended masters to hold out the prospect of future emancipation to their slaves; and we know that in the latter days of the Roman Empire the manumission of old slaves was very general, and of those who were not old, by

[1] See on this subject Plutarch, *Lives of the Gracchi*; Dionysius Halycarnassus, lib. ii. cap. 28; Columella, *De Re Rusticâ*. This whole subject has been very ably treated by M. Comte, *Traité de Législation*. See also Blanqui, *Histoire de l'Économie politique*; Dureau de la Malle, *Économie politique des Romains*.

no means rare. Besides this, the great expansion of commerce enabling the modern slaveowners to command every description of luxury in exchange for the produce of unskilled slave-labour, they have usually, in order to guard against rebellion, adopted the policy of brutalising their slaves by enforced ignorance—to such an extent that it is actually penal, in the majority of the Slave States of America, to teach a slave to read.[1] In the ancient civilisations, on the other hand, the slaves produced all the articles of refinement and luxury, conducted the most difficult forms of labour, and often exercised the most important professions. His mind was therefore very frequently cultivated to the highest point, and his value was proportioned to his intelligence. Terence, Epictetus, and Publius Syrus, were slaves, as were also some of the leading physicians, and many of the most distinguished sculptors. It should be remembered, too, that while modern slavery was from the beginning an evil, slavery among the ancients was at first an unmingled blessing—an important conquest of the spirit of humanity. When men were altogether barbarous they killed their prisoners; when they became more merciful they preserved them as slaves.[2]

Still in the later days of the republic, and during the empire, the sufferings of the slaves were such that it is impossible to read them without a shudder. The full ferocity of the national character was directed against them. They were exposed to wild beasts, or compelled to fight as gladiators; they were often mutilated with atrocious cruelty; they were

[1] 1863.

[2] The distinctions have been fully developed by Cairnes and Tocqueville.

tortured on the slightest suspicion, they were crucified for the most trivial offences. If a master was murdered all his slaves were tortured; if the perpetrator remained undiscovered all were put to death, and Tacitus relates a case in which no less than 400 suffered for a single undiscovered criminal. We read of one slave who was crucified for having stolen a quail, and of another who was condemned to be thrown to the fish for having broken a crystal vase. Juvenal describes a lady of fashion gratifying a momentary caprice by ordering a slave to be crucified.[1]

It was in this manner that the old civilisation, which rested on conquest and on slavery, had passed into complete dissolution, the free classes being altogether demoralised, and the slave classes exposed to the most horrible cruelties. At last the spirit of Christianity moved over this chaotic society, and not merely alleviated the evils that convulsed it, but also reorganised it on a new basis. It did this in three ways: it abolished slavery, it created charity, it inculcated self-sacrifice.

In the first of these tasks Christianity was powerfully assisted by two other agents. It is never possible for the moral sense to be entirely extinguished; and, by a law which is constantly manifested in history, we find that those who have emancipated themselves from the tendencies of an evil age often attain a

[1] See much horrible evidence of the atrocities practised on Roman slaves in Loiseleur, *Étude sur les Crimes et les Peines dans l'Antiquité et les Temps modernes* (Paris, 1863), pp. 83–98; and in Comte, *Traité de Législation*, liv. v. There is an extremely good essay on the condition of the ancient slaves—one of the best ever written on the subject—in Bodin's *Republic*, lib. i. c. 5

degree of moral excellence that had not been attained in ages that were comparatively pure. The latter days of pagan Rome exhibit a constant decay of religious reverence and of common morality; but they also exhibit a feverish aspiration towards a new religion, and a finer sense of the requirements of a high morality than had been displayed in the best days of the republic. We have a striking instance of the first of these tendencies in that sudden diffusion of the worship of Mithra, which was one of the most remarkable of the antecedents of Christianity. About seventy years before the Christian era this worship was introduced into Italy, as Plutarch tells us, by some Cilician pirates; and at a time when universal scepticism seemed the dominant characteristic of the Roman intellect, it took such firm root that for 200 years it continued to flourish, to excite the warmest enthusiasm, and to produce a religious revival in the centre of a population that appeared entirely depraved. In the same way, about the time when Nero ascended the throne, and when the humanity of the masses had sunk to the lowest ebb, there appeared in the centre of paganism a powerful reaction in favour of the suffering classes, of which Seneca was the principal exponent, but which was more or less reflected in the whole of the literature of the time. Seneca recurred to the subject again and again, and for the first time in Rome he very clearly and emphatically enforced the duties of masters to their slaves, and the existence of a bond of fraternity that no accidental difference of position could cancel. Nor was the movement confined to the writings of moralists. A long series of enactments by Nero, Claudius, Antonine, and Adrian gave the servile

class a legal position, took the power of life and death out of the hands of the masters, prevented the exposure of slaves when old and infirm on an island of the Tiber (where they had often been left to die), forbade their mutilation or their employment as gladiators, and appointed special magistrates to receive their complaints. What was done was, no doubt, very imperfect and inadequate, but it represented a tendency of which Christianity was the continuation.[1]

A second influence favourable to the slaves came into action at a later period: I mean the invasion of the barbarians, who have been justly described as the representatives of the principle of personal liberty in Europe.[2] Slavery was not, indeed, absolutely unknown among them, but it was altogether exceptional and entirely uncongenial with their habits. Prisoners of war, criminals, or men who had gambled away their liberty, were the chief slaves, and it is probable that servitude was rarely hereditary. Whenever, therefore, these tribes obtained an ascendency, they contributed to the destruction of slavery.

But when the fullest allowance has been made for these influences, it will remain an undoubted fact that the reconstruction of society was mainly the work of Christianity. Other influences could produce the manumission of many slaves, but Christianity alone could effect the profound change of character that rendered possible the abolition of slavery. There are few subjects more striking, and at the same time more instructive, than the history of that great transition. The Christians did not preach a revolutionary doc-

[1] This movement has been well noticed by Grotius, *De Jure*, lib. iii. c. 14.

[2] Guizot.

trine. They did not proclaim slavery altogether unlawful, or, at least, not until the bull of Alexander III. in the twelfth century, but they steadily sapped it at its basis, by opposing to it the doctrine of universal brotherhood, and by infusing a spirit of humanity into all the relations of society. Under Constantine, the old laws for the protection of slaves were re-enacted with additional provisions, and the separation of the family of the slave was forbidden. At the same time the servile punishment of crucifixion was abolished; but not so much from motives of humanity as on account of the sacred character it had acquired. Very soon a disposition was manifested on all sides to emancipate slaves, and that emancipation was invariably associated with religion. Sunday was especially recommended as the most appropriate day for the emancipation, and the ceremony almost invariably took place in the church. Gregory the Great set the example of freeing a number of his slaves as an act of devotion; and it soon became customary for sovereigns to do the same thing at seasons of great public rejoicing. Under Justinian the restrictions that had been placed upon emancipation by testament were removed. For a short time the mere resolution to enter a monastery gave liberty to the slave; and the monks being for the most part recruited from the servile caste, were always ready to facilitate the deliverance of their brethren. Even in religious persecutions this object was remembered. The Jews were early noted as slave-dealers, and among the first and most frèquent measures directed against them was the manumission of their Christian slaves. In all the rites of religion the difference between bond and free was studiously ignored, and the clergy invariably

proclaimed the act of enfranchisement to be meritorious.[1]

By these means an impulse favourable to liberty was imparted to all who were within the influence of the Church. Slavery began rapidly to disappear, or to fade into serfdom. At the same time the Church exerted her powers, with no less effect, to alleviate the sufferings of those who still continued in bondage. In England, especially, all the civil laws for the protection of the theows, or Saxon slaves, appear to have been preceded by, and based upon, the canon law. When, as far as can be ascertained, the power of the master was by law unlimited, we find the Church assuming a jurisdiction on the subject, and directing special penances 'against masters who took from their theows the money they had lawfully earned; against those who slew their theows without judgment or good cause; against mistresses who beat their female

[1] *Cod. Theod.* lib. ii. tit. 8, lex 1, and iv. 7, 1. For the history of the action of Christianity upon slavery, see A. Comte, *Philosophie positive*, tom. vi. pp. 43–47; Storch, *Économie politique*, tom. v. pp. 306–310; Troplong, *Influence du Christianisme sur le Droit civil*. The measures against Jew slave-owners have been noticed by Bedarride, du Lac, and many other writers. It must be acknowledged, however, that the Christian Emperor Gratian made one law which may rank with the most atrocious of Paganism. It provides, that if a slave accused his master of any crime except high treason, the justice of the charge was not to be examined, but the slave was to be committed to the flames: 'Cum accusatores servi dominis intonent, nemo judiciorum expectet eventum, nihil quæri, nihil discuti placet, sed cum ipsis delationum libellis, cum omni scripturarum et meditati criminis apparatu, nefandarum accusationum crementur auctores: excepto tamen adpetitæ majestatis crimine, in quo etiam servis honesta proditio est. Nam et hoc Tacinus tendit in dominos.'—*Cod. Theod.* ix. 6, 2. Honorius accorded slaves the liberty of accusing their masters in cases of heresy, and Theodosius in cases of paganism.

theows so that they die within three days; and against freemen who, by order of the lord, kill a theow.' Above all, the whole machinery of ecclesiastical discipline was put in motion to shelter the otherwise unprotected chastity of the female slave.[1] That Church which often seemed so haughty and so overbearing in its dealings with kings and nobles, never failed to listen to the poor and to the oppressed, and for many centuries their protection was the foremost of all the objects of its policy.

Yet as long as the old antipathy to labour continued, nothing of any lasting value had been effected. But here, again, the influence of the Church was exerted with unwavering beneficence and success. The Fathers employed all their eloquence in favour of labour;[2] but it is to the monks, and especially to the Benedictine monks, that the change is pre-eminently due. At a time when religious enthusiasm was all directed towards the monastic life as towards the ideal of perfection, they made labour an essential part of their discipline. Wherever they went, they revived the traditions of old Roman agriculture, and large tracts of France and Belgium were drained and planted by their hands. And though agriculture and gardening were the forms of labour in which they especially excelled, they indirectly became the authors of every other. For when a monastery was planted, it soon became the nucleus around which the inhabitants of the neighbourhood clustered. A town was thus gradually formed, civilised by Christian teaching, stimulated to industry by the example of the

[1] Wright, *Letter on the Political Condition of the English Peasantry during the Middle Ages.* London, 1843.

[2] Champagny, *La Charité chrétienne*, pp. 275–289.

monks, and protected by the reverence that attached to them. At the same time the ornamentation of the church gave the first impulse to art. The monks of the order of St. Basil devoted themselves especially to painting, and all the mediæval architects whose names have come down to us are said to have been ecclesiastics, till the rise of those great lay companies who designed or built the cathedrals of the twelfth century. A great number of the towns of Belgium trace their origin in this manner to the monks.[1] For a long time the most eminent prelates did not disdain manual labour; and it is related of no less a person than Becket that he was in the habit of labouring during harvest time in the fields with the monks at the monasteries which he visited.[2]

By these means the contempt for labour which had been produced by slavery was corrected, and the path was opened for the rise of the industrial classes which followed the crusades. The ferocity of character that had preceded Christianity was combated with equal zeal, though not quite equal success, by the organisation of Christian charity.

There is certainly no other feature of the old civilisation so repulsive as the indifference to suffering that it displayed. It is indeed true that in this respect there was a considerable difference between the Greeks and the Romans. In their armaments, in their wars, above all, in their extreme solicitude to guard the interests of orphans and minors that characterised

[1] See on this subject Perin, *La Richesse dans les Sociétés chrétiennes*, tom. i. pp. 345–361; Van Bruyssel, *Hist. du Commerce belge*, tom. i. pp. 58, 59.

[2] Eden, *History of the Labouring Classes in England*, vol. i. p. 50.

their legislation,[1] the former displayed a spirit of humanity for which we look in vain among the latter. Besides this, the political systems of Greece and, in its latter days, of Rome, were so framed that the state in a great measure supplied the material wants of the people, and a poor-law of the heaviest kind was, to a certain extent, a substitute for private beneficence. Still there appears to have been no public refuge for the sick; the infant was entirely unprotected; and infanticide having been—at least in the case of deformed children—expressly authorised by both Plato and Aristotle, was seldom regarded as a crime.[2] The practice of bringing up orphans avowedly for prostitution was equally common. The constant association of human suffering with popular entertainments rendered the popular mind continually more callous.

Very different was the aspect presented by the early Church. Long before the era of persecution had closed, the hospital and the Xenodochion, or refuge for strangers, was known among the Christians. The epitaphs in the catacombs abundantly prove the multitude of foundlings that were sustained by their charity; and when Christianity became the dominant religion, the protection of infants was one of the first changes that was manifested in the laws.[3] The

[1] Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, vol. ii. p. 123.

[2] Hume has very ingeniously suggested, and Malthus has adopted the suggestion, that the ancient permission of infanticide had on the whole a tendency to multiply rather than to diminish population, for, by removing the fear of a numerous family, it induced the poor to marry recklessly; while, once the children were born, natural affection would struggle to the last to sustain them.

[3] It is worthy of notice that deserted children in the early Church appear to have been supported mainly by private charity, and those foundling

frequent famines and the frightful distress caused by the invasion of the barbarians, and by the transition from slavery to freedom, were met by the most boundless, the most lavish benevolence. The Fathers were ceaselessly exhorting to charity, and in language so emphatic that it seemed sometimes almost to ignore the rights of property, and to verge upon absolute communism.[1] The gladiatorial games were ceaselessly denounced; but the affection with which they were regarded by the people long resisted the efforts of philanthropists, till, in the midst of the spectacle, the monk Telemachus rushed between the combatants, and his blood was the last that stained the arena. But perhaps the noblest testimony to the

hospitals, to which political economists so strongly object, were unknown. In the time of Justinian, however, we find notices of Brephotrophia, or asylums for children; and foundations, intended especially for foundlings, are said to have existed in the seventh and eighth centuries (Labourt, *Recherches sur les Enfants trouvés*, Paris, 1848, pp. 32, 33). A foundling hospital was established by Innocent III. at Rome. The objections to these institutions, on account of their encouragement of vice, as well as the frightful mortality prevailing among them, are well known. M'Culloch states that between 1792 and 1797 the admissions into foundling hospitals in Dublin were 12,786, and the deaths 12,561 (*Pol. Econ.* part i. ch. viii.). Magdalen asylums, which M. Ch. Comte and other economists have vehemently denounced, were also unknown in the early Church. The first erected in France was early in the thirteenth century; the famous institution of the Bon Pasteur was founded by a Dutch lady converted to Catholicism in 1698. A full history of these institutions is given in Parent-Duchatelet's singularly interesting work on *Prostitution in the City of Paris*. The admirable societies for the succour of indigent mothers, which complete the measures for the protection of infancy, were chiefly the work of the French freethinkers of the last century. Beaumarchais dedicated part of the profits of the *Mariage de Figaro* to that of Lyons (Ducellier, *Hist. des Classes laborieuses en France*, p. 296).

[1] See some very striking instances of this in Champagny's *Charité chrétienne*.

extent and the catholicity of Christian charity was furnished by an adversary. Julian exerted all his energies to produce a charitable movement among the Pagans; 'for it is a scandal,' he said, 'that the Galileans should support the destitute, not only of their religion, but of ours.'

In reading the history of that noble efflorescence of charity which marked the first ages of Christianity, it is impossible to avoid reflecting upon the strange destiny that has consigned almost all its authors to obscurity, while the names of those who took any conspicuous part in sectarian history have become household words among mankind. We hear much of martyrs, who sealed their testimony with blood; of courageous missionaries, who planted the standard of the Cross among savage nations and in pestilential climes; but we hear little of that heroism of charity, which, with no precedent to guide it, and with every early habit to oppose it, confronted the most loathsome forms of suffering, and, for the first time in the history of humanity, made pain and hideous disease the objects of a reverential affection. In the intellectual condition of bygone centuries, it was impossible that these things should be appreciated as they deserved. Charity was practised, indeed, nobly and constantly, but it did not strike the imagination, it did not elicit the homage of mankind. It was regarded by the masses as an entirely subordinate department of virtue; and the noblest efforts of philanthropy excited far less admiration than the macerations of an anchorite or the proselytising zeal of a sectarian. Fabiola, that Roman lady who seems to have done more than any other single individual in the erection of the first hospitals; St. Landry, the great apostle of

charity in France; even Telemachus himself, are all obscure names in history. The men who organised that vast network of hospitals that overspread Europe after the Crusades have passed altogether from recollection. It was not till the seventeenth century, when modern habits of thought were widely diffused, that St. Vincent de Paul arose and furnished an example of a saint who is profoundly and universally revered, and who owes that reverence to the splendour of his charity. But although it is true that during many centuries the philanthropist was placed upon a far lower level than at present, it is not the less true that charity was one of the earliest, as it was one of the noblest, creations of Christianity; and that, independently of the incalculable mass of suffering it has assuaged, the influence it has exercised in softening and purifying the character, in restraining the passions, and enlarging the sympathies of mankind, has made it one of the most important elements of our civilisation. The precepts and examples of the Gospel struck a chord of pathos which the noblest philosophies of antiquity had never reached. For the first time the aureole of sanctity encircled the brow of sorrow and invested it with a mysterious charm. It is related of an old Catholic saint that, at the evening of a laborious and well-spent life, Christ appeared to him as a man of sorrows, and, commending his past exertions, asked him what reward he would desire. Fame, and wealth, and earthly pleasures had no attraction to one who had long been weaned from the things of sense; yet the prospect of other and spiritual blessings for a moment filled the saint with joy; but when he looked upon that sacred brow, still shadowed as with the

anguish of Gethsemane, every selfish wish was forgotten, and, with a voice of ineffable love, he answered, 'Lord, that I might suffer most!'[1]

The third principle that Christianity employed to correct the evils of a decayed society was the principle of self-sacrifice. We have already seen some of the evils that resulted from the monastic system; but, considered in its proper place, it is not difficult to perceive its use. For the manner in which society attains that moderate and tempered excellence which is most congenial to its welfare is by imperfectly aspiring towards an heroic ideal. In an age, therefore, when the government of force had produced universal anarchy, theologians taught the doctrine of passive obedience. In an age when unbridled luxury had produced an unbridled corruption, they elevated voluntary poverty as a virtue. In an age when the facility of divorce had almost legalised polygamy, they proclaimed, with St. Jerome, that 'marriage peoples earth, but virginity heaven.'

The earlier portion of the middle ages presents the almost unique spectacle of a society that was in all its parts moulded and coloured by theological ideas, and it was natural that when the progress of knowledge destroyed the ascendency of those ideas a universal modification should ensue. But besides this, it is not, I think, difficult to perceive that the industrial condition of Europe at this time contained elements of dissolution. The true incitements to industry must ever be found in its own rewards. The desire

[1] This is, I believe, related of St. John of the Cross. There is a somewhat similar legend of a Spanish saint of the thirteenth century named Ramon Monat. The Virgin appeared to him and offered him a crown of roses, which he refused, and Christ then gave him His own crown of thorns.

of wealth, the multiplied wants and aims of an elaborated civilisation, the rivalry and the ambition of commerce, are the chief causes of its progress. Labour performed as a duty, associated with the worship of voluntary poverty, and with the condemnation of luxury, was altogether abnormal. It was only by the emancipation and developement of some of the towns of Italy and Belgium that the industrial spirit became entirely secular, and, assuming a new prominence and energy, introduced an order of tendencies into Europe which gradually encroached upon the domain of theology, and contributed largely towards the Reformation, and towards the rationalism that followed it. But before examining the nature of those tendencies it may be necessary to say a few words concerning the circumstances that gave them birth.

Although the old Roman slavery received its death-blow under the influences I have noticed, some lingering remains of it continued till the twelfth or thirteenth century;[1] and the serfdom that followed not only continued much later, but even for a long time absorbed great numbers of the free peasants.

[1] In 1102 a Council of Westminster found it necessary to prohibit the sale of slaves in England (Eden, *Hist. of Labouring Classes*, vol. i. p. 10); and still later the English were accustomed to sell slaves to the Irish, and Giraldus Cambrensis tells us that the emancipation of their slaves as an act of devotion was enjoined by the Irish bishops on the occasion of Strongbow's invasion. Bodin has noticed some passages from the bulls of the Popes relative to slaves in Italy as late as the thirteenth century (*République*, p. 43). Religion, which so powerfully contributed to the emancipation, in some cases had an opposite influence, for Christians enslaved without scruple Jews and Mahometans, who naturally retaliated. The number of Christian slaves bought up by the Jews had been one of the complaints of Agobard in the ninth century.

The rapacity of the nobles, and the famines that were so frequent during the middle ages, induced the poor to exchange their liberty for protection and for bread; and the custom of punishing all crimes by fines, with the alternative of servitude in case of non-payment, still further increased the evil. At the same time the mildness of the ecclesiastical rule, and also the desire to obtain the advantage of the prayers of the monks, induced many to attach themselves as serfs to the monasteries.[1] Although it would be unfair to accuse the Church of abandoning the cause of emancipation, it is probable that this last fact in some degree lessened her zeal.[2] The bulk of the population of Europe were emancipated between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries; but the remains of serfdom have even now scarcely disappeared.[3] In the towns, however, personal and political liberty was attained much earlier. Something of the old Roman municipal government had lingered faintly in the south of France during the whole of the middle ages; but the complete emancipation was chiefly due to the necessities of sovereigns, who, in their conflicts with the

[1] See on all these causes Hallam's *Middle Ages*, vol. i. pp. 217–218.

[2] 'The clergy, and especially several Popes, enforced manumission as a duty upon laymen, and inveighed against the scandal of keeping Christians in bondage; but they were not, it is said, as ready in performing their own parts. The villeins upon the Church lands were among the last who were emancipated. — Hallam, *Middle Ages*, vol. i. p. 221.

[3] The decline of serfdom has been treated by Hallam, *Hist. of Middle Ages*, vol. i. pp. 222, 223. As late as 1775, colliers in Scotland were bound to perpetual service in the works to which they belonged. Upon the sale of those works the purchasers had a right to their services, nor could they be elsewhere received into service except by permission of the owner of the collieries. See a note by M'Culloch, in his edition of the *Wealth of Nations*, vol. ii. p. 186.

nobles or with other nations, gladly purchased by privileges the assistance of the towns. It is probable that the fact of many of the English kings being usurpers contributed in this way to the emancipation of the English citizens ;[1] and the struggle between the king and nobles in France, and between the Popes and the emperors in Italy, had a similar effect. Whenever a town was emancipated an impulse was given to industry. The Crusades at last gave the municipal and industrial element an extraordinary prominence. The great sums for which kings and nobles became indebted to the middle classes, the rapid extension of navigation, the inventions that were imported into Europe from the East, and, above all, the happy fortune that made the Italian towns the centre of the stream of wealth, had all, in different ways, increased the influence of the towns. In the course of the twelfth century, nearly all which carried on commercial intercourse with Italy had obtained municipal government, and some of those of Belgium, and along the shores of the Baltic, almost equalled the Italian ones in commercial activity.[2] At the same time the creation of guilds and corporations of

[1] 'It wants not probability, though it manifestly appears not, that William Rufus, Henry I., and King Stephen, being all usurpers, granted large immunities to burghs to secure them to their party, and by the time that Glanvil wrote, which was in the reign of Henry II., burghs had so great privileges as that, if a bondsman or servant remained in a burgh as a burgess or member of it a year and a day, he was by that very residence made free; and so it was in Scotland: he was always free, and enjoyed the liberty of the burgh if he were able to buy a burgage, and his lord claimed him not within a year and a day.'—Brady, *Historical Treatise on Cities* (1690), p. 18.

[2] Thierry, *Hist. du Tiers État*, pp. 24, 25. It is scarcely necessary to refer to the admirable sketch of the history of towns in the *Wealth of Nations*.

different trades consolidated the advantages that had been gained. For although it is undoubtedly true that in a normal condition of society the system of protection and monopoly, of which the corporations were the very ideal, is extremely unfavourable to production, in the anarchy of the middle ages it was of great use in giving the trading classes a union which protected them from plunder, and enabled them to incline legislation in their favour. Commerce, under their influence, became a great power. A new and secular civilisation was called into being, which gradually encroached upon the ascendency of theological ideas, and introduced a new phase in the developement of Europe.

It may be observed, however, that the opposition that at last arose between the theological and the commercial spirit is not exactly what we might at first sight have expected; for in the earlier stages of society they have striking points of affinity. Missionary enterprises and commercial enterprises are the two main agents for the diffusion of civilisation; they commonly advance together, and each has very frequently proved the pioneer of the other. Besides this, the Crusades, which were the chief expression of the religious sentiments of the middle ages, owed their partial success in a great measure to the commercial communities. It was the merchants of Amalfi who, by their traffic, first opened the path for Christians to Jerusalem, and, in conjunction with the other Italian republics, supplied the chief wants of the Crusaders. The spirit that made the Venetian merchants of the thirteenth century stamp the image of Christ upon their coins, and the merchants of Florence impose a tax upon their rich woollen manu-

factures, in order, with the produce, to erect that noble cathedral which is even now among the wonders of the world, seemed to augur well for their alliance with the Church. Yet the event shows that these expectations were unfounded, and whenever the type of civilisation was formed mainly by commercial enterprise, there arose a conflict with the theologians.

The first point in which the commercial civilisation came into collision with the Church was the lawfulness of lending money at interest, or, as it was then called, of practising usury.

In the present day, when political economy has been raised to a science, nothing can appear more simple than the position that interest occupies in pecuniary arrangements. We know that, in a society in which great works of industry or public utility are carried on, immense sums will necessarily be borrowed at interest, and that such transactions are usually advantageous both to the lender and the borrower. The first lends his money for the purpose of increasing his wealth by the interest he receives; the second obtains the advantage of disposing of a sum which is sufficient to set in motion a lucrative business, and this advantage more than compensates him for the interest he pays. We know, too, that this interest is not capricious in its amount, but is governed by fixed laws. It usually consists of two distinct elements—the interest which is the price of money, and what has been termed[1] the 'interest of assurance.' The price of money, like the price of most other commodities, is

[1] By J.-B. Say, in his *Traité d'Économie politique*, where the subject of usury is admirably discussed. The term, 'interest of assurance,' however, is defective, because it does not comprise the opprobrium cast upon the lender, which is one great cause of the extraordinary rise of interest.

determined by the law of supply and demand.[1] It depends upon the proportion between the amount of money that is to be lent and the demands of the borrowers, which proportion is itself influenced by many considerations, but is chiefly regulated in a normal state of society by the amount of wealth and the amount of enterprise. The second kind of interest arises in those cases in which there is some danger that the creditor may lose what he has lent, or in which some penalty, inflicted by law or by public opinion, attaches to the loan. For it is manifest that men will not divert their capital from secure to insecure enterprises unless there is a possibility that they may obtain a larger gain in the latter than in the former, and it is equally manifest that no one will voluntarily take a course that exposes him to legal penalties or to public reproach unless he has some pressing motive for doing so.

If, then, when the law of supply and demand has regulated the rate of interest, the government of the country interposes, and either prohibits all interest or endeavours to fix it at a lower rate; if public opinion stigmatises the lender at interest as infamous,

[1] As this is not a treatise of Political Economy, the reader will, I trust, pardon my adopting this old and simple formulary, without entering at length into the controversy created by the new formulary of Ricardo—that price is regulated by the cost of production. In the vast majority of cases these two formularies lead to exactly the same result, and the principal advantage of that of Ricardo seems to be, first, that in some cases it gives greater precision than the other, and secondly, that it supplements the other, meeting a few cases to which the old formulary will not apply. In determining the value of the precious metals as measured by other things—that is to say, as reflected in prices—the rule of Ricardo seems most satisfactory: in determining the normal rate of interest, the old rule is, I think, perfectly adequate. There are some good remarks on this in Chevalier, *Écon. polit.* sec. v. c. 1.

and if religion brands his act as a crime, it is easy from the foregoing principles to perceive what must be the consequence. As long as there are persons who urgently desire to borrow, and persons who possess capital, it is quite certain that the relation of debtor and creditor will continue; but the former will find that the terms have greatly altered to his disadvantage. For the capitalist will certainly not lend without exacting interest, and such interest as is at least equivalent to the profits he would derive if he employed his money in other ways. If the law forbids this, he must either not lend, or lend in a manner that exposes him to legal penalties. A great number, overcome by their scruples or their fears, will adopt the former course, and consequently the amount of money in the community which is to be lent, and which is one of the great regulators of the price of money, will be diminished; while those who venture to incur the risk of infringing human and, as they believe, Divine laws, and of incurring the infamy attached by public opinion to the act, must be bribed by additional interest. At the same time the furtive character given to the transaction is eminently favourable to imposition. The more therefore law, public opinion, and religion endeavour to lower the current rate of interest, the more that rate will be raised.

But these principles, simple as they may now appear, were entirely unknown to the ancients, and from an extremely early period the exaction of interest was looked upon with disfavour. The origin of this prejudice is probably to be found in the utter ignorance of all uncivilised men about the laws that regulate the increase of wealth, and also in that early and universal sentiment which exalts prodigality above

parsimony. At all times and in all nations this preference has been shown, and there is no literature in which it has not been reflected. From the time of Thespis downwards, as Bentham reminds us, there is scarcely an instance in which a lender and a borrower have appeared upon the stage without the sympathies of the audience being claimed for the latter. The more ignorant the people the more strong will be this prejudice; and it is therefore not surprising that those who were the pre-eminent representatives of parsimony, who were constantly increasing their wealth in a way that was so different from the ordinary forms of industry, and who often appeared in the odious light of oppressors of the poor, should have been from the earliest times regarded with dislike. Aristotle and many other of the Greek philosophers cordially adopted the popular view; but at the same time money-lending among the Greeks was a common though a despised profession, and was little or not at all molested by authority. Among the Gauls it was placed under the special patronage of Mercury. In Rome also it was authorised by law, though the legislators constantly sought to regulate its terms, and though both the philosophers and the people at large branded the money-lenders as the main cause of the decline of the empire. The immense advantages that capital possesses in a slave-country, and the craving for luxury that was universal, combined with the insecurity produced by general maladministration and corruption, and by frequent tumults created with the express object of freeing the plebeians from their debts, had raised the ordinary rate of interest to an enormous extent; and this, which was in truth a symptom of the diseased condition of society, was

usually regarded as the cause. At the same time the extreme severity with which Roman legislation treated insolvent debtors exasperated the people to the highest point against the exacting creditor, while, for the reasons I have already stated, the popular hatred of the usurers and the interference of legislators with their trade still further aggravated the evil. Besides this, it should be observed that when public opinion stigmatises money-lending as criminal, great industrial enterprises that rest upon it will be unknown. Those who borrow will therefore for the most part borrow on account of some urgent necessity, and the fact that interest is wealth made from the poverty of others will increase the prejudice against it.

When the subject came under the notice of the Fathers and of the mediæval writers, it was treated with unhesitating emphasis. All the pagan notions of the iniquity of money-lending were unanimously adopted, strengthened by the hostility to wealth which early Christianity constantly inculcated, and enforced with such a degree of authority and of persistence that they soon passed into nearly every legislative code. Turgot and some other writers of the eighteenth century have endeavoured to establish a distinction between more or less rigorous theologians on this subject. In fact, however, as anyone who glances over the authorities that have been collected by the old controversialists on the subject may convince himself, there was a perfect unanimity on the general principles connected with usury till the casuists of the seventeenth century, although there were many controversies about their special applications.[1] A

[1] All the old Catholic works on the Canon Law and on Moral Philosophy show this, but I may especially indicate Con-

radical misconception of the nature of interest ran through all the writings of the Fathers, of the mediæval theologians, and of the theologians of the time of the Reformation, and produced a code of commercial morality that appears with equal clearness in the Patristic invectives, in the decrees of the Councils, and in nearly every book that has ever been written on the Canon Law. The difference between theologians was not in what they taught, but in the degree of emphasis with which they taught it. There were no doubt times in which the doctrine of the Church fell into comparative desuetude: there were times when usury was very generally practised, and not very generally condemned. There are even a few examples of Councils which, without in any degree justifying usury, contented themselves with expressly censuring priests who had practised it.[1]

cina, *Adversus Usuram* (Romæ, 1746); Concina, *Usura Contractus trini* (Romæ, 1748); Leotardus, *De Usuris* (Lugduni, 1649); Lamet et Fromageau, *Dictionnaire des Cas de Conscience* (a collection of the decisions of the doctors of the Sorbonne), art. *Usure* (Paris, 1733); and *Conférences ecclésiastiques de Paris sur l'Usure* (Paris, 1748). This last work was published under the direction or, at all events, patronage of Cardinal de Noailles, and contains a very large amount of information on the subject. It went through several editions: the first was published in 1697. See too Liégeois, *Essai sur l'Histoire et la Législation de l'Usure*.

[1] This appears to have been the case in England, where the laxity on the subject was considerable, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, vol. i. pp. 79–113). Only a month before the Council of Nice, Constantine had confirmed the old Roman law which legalised an interest of 12 per cent.; and it was probably the desire to avoid collision with the civil power that dictated the language of a curious decree of the Council, in which usury is condemned only when practised by clergymen, but at the same time is condemned on grounds that are equally applicable to laymen: 'Quoniam multi sub regula constituti avaritiam et turpia lucra sectantur, oblitique divinæ Scripturæ dicentis, "Qui

But at the same time there is a long unbroken chain of unequivocal condemnations, extending from the period of the Fathers to the period of the Reformation.

The doctrine of the Church has been involved in some little obscurity on account of the total change that has taken place during the last three centuries in the meaning of the word usury, and also on account of the many subtleties with which the casuists surrounded it; but if the reader will pardon a somewhat pedantic array of definitions, it will be easy in a few words to disentangle it from all ambiguity.

Usury, then, according to the unanimous teaching of the old theologians, consisted of any interest that was exacted by the lender from the borrower solely as the price of the loan.[1] Its nature was, therefore,

pecuniam suam non dedit ad usuram," mutuum dantes centesimas exigunt; juste censuit sancta et magna synodus ut si quis inventus fuerit post hanc definitionem usuras accipiens . . . dejiciatur a cloro et alienus existat a regula.' (See Troplong, *Mémoire sur le Prêt à l'Intérêt*, read before the Institute in 1844.) But the Council of Illiberis, in the beginning of the fourth century, and the Third and Fourth Councils of Carthage expressly condemned usury in laymen.

[1] The following were the principal definitions of usury employed by the writers on Canon Law: — 1. Usura est pretium usus pecuniæ mutuatæ. 2. Lucrum immediate ex mutuo proveniens. 3. Usura est cum quis plus exigat in pecuniâ aut in aliquâ re quam dederit. 4. Ultra sortem lucrum aliquod ipsius ratione mutui exactum. —This last is the definition of Benedict XIV. Melanchthon defined usury nearly in the same way: 'Usura est lucrum supra sortem exactum tantum propter officium mutuationis.' To this I may add the description given by St. Augustine of the sin: 'Si fœneraveris homini, id est mutuam pecuniam dederis, a quo aliquid plus quam dedisti expectas accipere, non pecuniam solam sed aliquid plus quam dedisti, sive illud triticum sit, sive vinum, sive oleum, sive quodlibet aliud, si plus quam dedisti expectas accipere fœnerator es et in hoc improbandus non laudandus.' (Sermon iii. on Psalm xxxvi.). —See Concina, *Adversus Usuram*, pp. 32–33.

entirely independent of the amount that was asked, and of the civil laws upon the subject. Those who lent money at three per cent. were committing usury quite as really as those who lent it at forty per cent.,[1] and those who lent money at interest in a country where there was no law upon the subject, as those who lent it in defiance of the most stringent prohibitions.[2] It is not, however, to be inferred from this that everything of the nature of interest was forbidden. In the first place there was the case of permanent alienation of capital. A man might deprive himself for ever of a certain sum, and receive instead an annual revenue; for in this case he was not receiving the price of a loan, as a loan implies the ultimate restitution of that which had been lent. There is some reason to believe that this modification was introduced at a late period, when the rise of industrial enterprises had begun to show the ruinous character of the doctrine of usury; but at all events the distinction was generally adopted, and became the cornerstone of a large amount of legislation.[3]

[1] In 1677, when much casuistry had been already applied to the subject, some one submitted this point to the doctors of the Sorbonne. Their decision was: 'Que Titius ne seroit pas exempt d'usure en ne prenant que trois pour cent d'intérêt, parce que tout profit et tout gain tiré du prêt, si petit qu'il puisse être, fait l'usure. L'Ézéchiel, au ch. xviii, ne fait point de distinction du plus ou du moins.'—Lamet et Fromageau, *Dict. des Cas de Conscience* (art. *Usure*).

[2] Thus Innocent XI. condemned the proposition, 'Usura non est dum ultra sortem aliquid exigitur tanquam ex benevolentia et gratitudine debitum, sed solum si exigatur tanquam ex justitia debitum.'—See *Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 100.

[3] 'Tandis que le cri des peuples contre le prêt à intérêt le faisait proscrire, l'impossibilité de l'abolir entièrement fit imaginer la subtilité de l'aliénation du capital; et c'est ce système qui, étant devenu presque général parmi les théologiens, a été adopté aussi par les jurisconsultes, à raison de l'influence beaucoup trop grande qu'ont

In the next place there were certain cases in which a lender might claim interest from his debtor—not as the price of the loan, not as a rent exacted for the use of money—but on other grounds which were defined by theologians, and which were, or were at least believed to be, entirely distinct.[1] Such were the cases known among the schoolmen under the titles of 'damnum emergens' and 'lucrum cessans.' If a man was so situated that, by withdrawing a portion of his capital from the business in which he was engaged, he would suffer a palpable and unquestionable loss, and if for the purpose of assisting his neighbour he consented to withdraw a certain sum, he might stipulate a compensation for the loss he thus incurred. He was not lending money for the purpose of gaining money by the transaction, and the interest he exacted was solely a compensation for a loss he had actually sustained. In the same way, if a man was able to apply money to a purpose that would bring a certain gain, and if he consented to divert a certain sum from this channel in order to lend it to a friend, it was generally (but by no means always [2]) believed that he might receive an exact equivalent for the sacrifice he

eue sur notre jurisprudence et notre législation les principes du droit canon.' (Turgot, *Mém. sur les Prêts d'Argent*, § 29.) Some seem to have tried to justify usury on the condition of the lender obliging himself not to demand his money till a certain period, for we find Alexander VII. condemning the proposition, 'Quod sit licitum mutuanti aliquid ultra sortem exigere, modo se obliget ad non repetendum sortem usque ad certum tempus.' (*Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 100.)

[1] These cases, of which I have only noticed the principal, and which were many of them very complicated, were discussed with much detail by the doctors of the Sorbonne. See Lamet et Fromageau; see also the *Mémoire* of Troplong.

[2] St. Thomas Aquinas was believed to be hostile to this indulgence.

had unquestionably made. The question, too, of insurances was early raised, and created a cloud of the most subtle distinctions: so too did those great lending societies, which were founded in Italy by Bernardin de Feltre, under the title of 'Monti di Pietà,' for the purpose of counteracting the usury of the Jews. Their object was to lend money to the poor without interest, but very soon a small sum was exacted in return, in addition to what had been lent. This was very naturally stigmatised as usury, because, as we have seen, usury was entirely irrespective of the amount that was asked; but some theologians maintained, and Leo X. at last decided by a bull, that this exaction was not usurious, because it was simply a fee for the payment of the officials connected with the establishments, and not the price of the loan.[1]

These examples will serve to show the general character that controversies on usury assumed. Above all the complications and subtleties with which the subject was surrounded, one plain intelligible principle remained—the loan of money was an illicit way of acquiring wealth. In other words, anyone who engaged in any speculation of which the increase of his capital by interest was the object, had committed usury, and was therefore condemned by the Church. It is said that after the twelfth century the lawfulness of usury was a popular tenet among the Greeks;[2]

[1] Besides Lamet and Fromageau there is a discussion about 'Monti di Pietà' in Escobar's *Moral Philosophy*.

[2] *Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 23. Salelles, *De Materiis Tribunalium Inquisitionis* (Romæ, 1651), tom. ii. p. 156. According to Cibrario (*Economia Politica del Medio Evo*, vol. ii. p. 52), a heretic named Bech, who was burnt in Piedmont in 1388, was accused among other things of having maintained that 'incest and usury are not sins.'

but before this time the teaching of theologians on the subject seems to have been perfectly unanimous, and with this exception it continued to be so till the Reformation. Usury was not only regarded as an ecclesiastical crime, but was also, as far as the Church could influence the legislators, a civil one, and it was especially singled out as one that should be investigated with torture.[1]

Such then was the doctrine of theologians. It remains to examine for a moment the arguments on which it was based. The first of these in the present day appears very startling. It was said that usury, however moderate, is one of those crimes, like murder or robbery, that are palpably contrary to the law of nature. This was shown by the general consent of all nations against it, and also by a consideration of the nature of money; for 'all money is sterile by nature,'[2] and therefore to expect profit from it is

[1] Chartario, *Praxis Interrogandarum Rerum* (Romæ, 1618), p. 201.

[2] This is an absurdity of Aristotle, and the number of centuries during which it was incessantly asserted without being (as far as we know) once questioned is a curious illustration of the longevity of a sophism when expressed in a terse form and sheltered by a great name. It is enough to make one ashamed of one's species to think that Bentham was the first to bring into notice the simple consideration that if the borrower employs the borrowed money in buying bulls and cows, and if these produce calves to ten times the value of the interest, the money borrowed can scarcely be said to be sterile or the borrower a loser. The Greek word for interest (τόκος, from τίκτω, I beget) was probably connected with this delusion. Besides a host of theologians, the notion that usury was contrary to the law of nature was maintained by Domat, one of the greatest names in French jurisprudence. Leo X. condemned usury on the following grounds: 'Dominus noster Lucâ attestante, aperte nos præcepto adstrinxit ne ex dato mutuo quidquam ultra sortem speraremus; est enim propria usurarum interpretatio quando videlicet ex usurâ rei quæ non germinat de nullo labore, nullo sumptu, nullo periculo, lucrum fœnusque conquiri studetur.' (*Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 100.)

absurd. The essence of every equitable loan is, that precisely that which was lent should be returned; and therefore, as Lactantius maintained, and as the mediæval moralists unanimously repeated, to exact interest is a species of robbery. It is true that it might naturally occur to the minds even of mediæval theologians that houses or horses were sometimes lent at a fixed rent, which was paid notwithstanding their restitution. But this difficulty was answered by a very subtle distinction, which if it was not originated was at least chiefly developed by St. Thomas Aquinas. The use of a horse may be distinguished, at least by the intellect, from the horse itself. Men borrow a horse and afterwards restore it, but the usage of the horse has been a distinct advantage, for which they may lawfully pay; but in the case of money, which is consumed in the usage, the thing itself has no value distinct from its usage. When therefore a man restores the exact sum he has borrowed, he has done all that can be required of him, because to make him pay for the usage of this money is to make him pay for a thing that does not exist, or, perhaps more correctly, to make him pay twice for the same thing, and is therefore, said St. Thomas, dishonest.[1]

This was one branch of the argument; the other was derived from authority. The political economy of the Fathers was received with implicit faith, and a

[1] The views of St. Thomas (who was one of the chief authorities on the subject) are in the *Summa*, Pars ii. Quæst. 78. At the end of the eighteenth century they were drawn up with great elaboration by a writer named Pothier, and torn to pieces by Turgot (*Mém. sur les Prêts d'Argent*, § 26–27). The argument as I have stated it is, I know, very obscure, but I venture to think that is chiefly the fault of St. Thomas.

long series of passages of Scripture were cited which were universally regarded as condemnatory of usury.[1]

As it is quite certain that commercial and industrial enterprise cannot be carried on upon a large scale without borrowing, and as it is equally certain that these loans can only be effected by paying for them in the shape of interest, it is no exaggeration to say that the Church had cursed the material developement of civilisation. As long as her doctrine of usury was believed and acted on, the arm of industry was paralysed, the expansion of commerce was arrested, and all the countless blessings that have flowed from them were withheld.[2] As, however, it is impossible for a

[1] The chief passages cited were—*Lev.* xxv. 36, *Deut.* xxiii. 19, *Ps.* xv. 5, *Ezek.* xviii., and (from the New Testament) *Luke* vi. 35. As Turgot notices, the popular interpretation of this last passage was peculiarly inexcusable in Catholics, who always interpret the injunctions that surround it as 'counsels of perfection,' not obligatory on every man. Yet Bossuet was able to say, 'La tradition constante des conciles, à commencer par les plus anciens, celle des papes, des pères, des interprètes et de l'Église romaine, est d'interpréter ce verset, "Mutuum date nihil inde sperantes," comme prohibitif du profit qu'on tire du prêt; "inde" c'est-à-dire de l'usure.' (*2nde Pastorale, contre la Version de Richard Simon.*)

[2] Montesquieu, speaking of the scholastic writings on usury, says, with a little exaggeration, 'Ainsi nous devons aux spéculations des Scholastiques tous les malheurs qui ont accompagné la destruction du commerce' (*Esprit des Lois*, liv. xxi. c. 20); and Turgot, 'L'observation rigoureuse de ces lois serait destructive de tout commerce; aussi ne sont-elles pas observées rigoureusement. Elles interdisent toute stipulation d'intérêt sans aliénation du capital. . . . Et c'est une chose notoire qu'il n'y a pas sur la terre une place de commerce où la plus grande partie du commerce ne roule sur l'argent, emprunté sans aliénation du capital' (*Mém. sur les Prêts d'Argent*, § xiv.). M. Sismondi has justly observed (*Nouveaux Principes d'Économie politique*) that the prohibition of usury in Catholic countries has also done very much to promote a passion for luxury, and to discourage economy—the rich who were not engaged in business finding no easy way of employing their savings productively.

society that is even moderately civilised to continue without usury, we find, from a very early period, a certain antagonism existing on this subject between the civil law and the Church. The denunciations of the Fathers were soon succeeded by a long series of Councils which unanimously condemned usurers, and the canonical law is crowded with enactments against them; but at the same time kings found it constantly necessary to borrow for the equipment of their armies, and they very naturally shrank from suppressing a class to which they had recourse. Edward the Confessor indeed in England, St. Lewis in France,[1] and a few other sovereigns of remarkable piety, took this extreme step; but generally usury, though not altogether recognised, was in some degree connived at. Besides, to lend was esteemed much more sinful than to borrow,[2] and in the earlier part of the middle ages the usurers were almost exclusively Jews, who had no scruples on the subject, and who had adopted this profession partly because of the great profits they could derive from it, and partly because it was almost

[1] Confirming in this respect a French law of the eighth and ninth century which provided that 'Usuram non solum clerici, sed nec laici Christiani, exigere debent.' Some think Justinian prohibited usury, but there is a good deal of dispute about this. Richard I. of England 'Christianum fœneratorem fieri prohibuit aut quacunque conventionis occasione aliquid recipere ultra id quod mutuo concessit' (*Bromton Chronicon*). Some governors made it a law that the property of those who had been usurers might be confiscated by the crown after their death (Cibrario, *Economia Politica del Medio Evo*, vol. iii. p. 319). This arrangement had a double advantage: the government might borrow money from the usurer while he was living, and rob his children when he was dead.

[2] According to the doctors of the Sorbonne it was sinful to borrow at usury except under extreme necessity, but the whole stress of the denunciations was directed against the lenders.

the only one open to them. It was not till the close of the eleventh century that Christian money-lenders became numerous, and the rise of this class was the immediate consequence of the commercial development of the Italian republics. The Lombards soon became the rivals of the Jews;[1] the merchants of Florence carried on usury to a still greater extent,[2] and for the first time this was done openly, with the full sanction both of law and public opinion. From Italy usury passed to France and England;[3] and the Third Council of the Lateran,[4] which was convened by Alexander III., in 1179, complained that it had so increased that it was almost everywhere practised. The same Council endeavoured to arrest it by decreeing that no notorious and impenitent usurer should be admitted to the altar, should be absolved at the hour of death, or should receive Christian burial.[5] All this, however, was in vain: the expansion of commercial enterprise became every year more marked, and the increase of usury was its necessary consequence.

In this manner the rise of an industrial civilisation produced a distinct opposition between the practice of Christendom and the teaching of the Church. On the one hand to lend money at interest became a constant and recognised transaction, and the more the laws of

[1] Bedarride, *Hist. des Juifs*, pp. 186–189.

[2] Muratori, *Antiq. Italicæ*, dissert. xvi.—a good history of the rise of Christian usurers.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.* This Council is reckoned a general one by the Catholics.

[5] *Ibid.* The Council of Vienne, presided over by Clement V., pronounced it to be heretical to justify usury: 'Sane si quis in istum errorem inciderit, ut pertinaciter affirmare præsumat exercere usuras non esse peccatum, decernimus eum velut hæreticum puniendum.' (*Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 93.)

wealth were understood, the more evident it became that it was both necessary and innocent. On the other hand there was no subject in the whole compass of Catholic theology on which the teaching of the Church was more unequivocal.[1] Usury had always been defined as any sum that was exacted as the price of a loan, and it had been condemned with unqualified severity by the Fathers, by a long series of Popes and Councils, by the most eminent of the mediæval theologians, and by the unanimous voice of the Church. The result of this conflict evidently depended on the comparative prevalence of dogmatic and rationalistic modes of thought. As long as men derived their notions of duty from authority and tradition, they would adopt one conclusion; when they began to interrogate their own sense of right, they would soon arrive at another.

The sequel of the history of usury is soon told. The Reformation, which was in a great measure effected by the trading classes, speedily dispelled the illusions on the subject, although the opinions of the Reformers were at first somewhat divided. Melanchthon, Brentius, and (perhaps) Bucer adopted the old Catholic view;[2] but Calvin maintained that usury was only wrong when it was exacted in an oppressive manner from the poor,[3] and, with admirable good

[1] According to Concina, usury has been condemned by twenty-eight Councils (six of them regarded by the Church of Rome as general) and by seventeen popes (*Adversus Usuram*, pp. 112–113).

[2] See the passages in Concina, *Usura trini Contractûs*, pp. 250–251.

[3] Concina, *Adversus Usuram*, p. 2. This view was also adopted by Molinæus: 'Carolus Molinæus contendit acerrime usuram, nisi fraus adsit aut debitor nimium opprimatur, licitam esse. Doctores omnes a sexcentis annis contrarium docuerunt' (Leotardus, *De Usuris*, p. 15.) Calvin was one of the very first who exposed the folly of the old

sense, he refused to listen to those who exhorted him to check it by law. In England money-lending was first formally permitted under Henry VIII.[1] Somewhat later Grotius discussed it in a liberal though rather hesitating tone, maintaining strongly that it was at least not contrary to the law of nature.[2] Two or three other Protestant writers, who are now almost forgotten, appear to have gone still further; but the author to whom the first unequivocal assertion of the modern doctrine of interest is due seems to be Saumaise,[3] who, between 1638 and 1640, published three books in its defence. His view was speedily but almost silently adopted by most Protestants, and the change produced no difficulty or hostility to Christianity.

Among the Catholics, on the other hand, the difficulty of discarding the past was very considerable. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the modern distinction between usury and interest had been introduced among laymen, to the great indignation of theologians,[4] in order to evade the censure of the

notion about the sterility of money.—See a remarkable passage in one of his letters quoted by M'Culloch, *Pol. Econ.*, pt. iii. ch. viii.

[1] Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 304.

[2] *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, lib. ii. cap. 12.

[3] Better known as Salmasius, the author of the *Defensio Regis* to which Milton replied.

[4] Le Fèvre, who was tutor to Louis XIII., mentions that in his time the term interest had been substituted for usury, and he added: 'C'est là proprement ce qu'on peut appeler l'art de chicaner avec Dieu.' Marot also, who wrote in the first half of the sixteenth century, made this change the object of a sarcasm:—

'On ne prête plus à l'usure,
Mais tant qu'on veut à l'intérêt.'

(See *Conférences sur l'Usure*, tom. i. p. 25.)

According to Concina, the first, or nearly the first (*fere primus*), Catholic theologian who cavilled at the old definitions of usury was Le Coreur, who wrote a treatise in 1682, in

canonical law. The casuistry of the Jesuits was soon applied to the subject, and two or three circuitous ways of obtaining interest became popular, which gave rise to long and virulent controversies.[1] Early in the eighteenth century three professors of the University of Ingolstadt, named Pichler, Tanner, and Hannold, took a further step, and contended that some forms of undoubted usury might be safely practised if the civil law permitted them;[2] and in 1743 a writer named Broedersen wrote a book which seems to have embodied and combined nearly all the leading sentiments of the different schools of laxer theologians. The subject had by this time excited so much agitation that Benedict XIV. deemed it necessary to interpose. He accordingly, as the head of the Catholic Church, issued an encyclical letter, in which he acknowledged that there were occasions when a lender, on special grounds, might claim a sum additional to what he had lent, but refused to pronounce in detail on the merits of the controversies that had been raised concerning particular kinds of loans, and contented himself with laying down

which he maintained that moderate interest might be exacted on commercial loans, but not on those which had their origin in the necessities of poverty (*Adversus Usuram*, p. 3). The Catholic writers at this period nearly always spoke of the modern doctrine as a Protestant heresy—the heresy of Calvin, Molinæus, and Salmasius.

[1] One of these was elaborately discussed by Concina in a treatise called *De Usura trini Contractûs* (Romæ, 1748). Others, which arose especially in the commercial communities of Belgium, are noticed in Lamet and Fromageau, and also by Troplong.

[2] Pichler was a Jesuit, and his views on usury—a perfect cloud of subtleties—are contained in his *Jus Canonicum* (Venetiis, 1730), lib. iii. tit. 19. Tanner was also a Jesuit. Of Hannold I know nothing except from the brief notice of his opinions in Concina, *De Usura trini Contractûs*, pp. 152–155.

authoritatively the doctrine of the Church. That doctrine was that usury is always a sin; that it consists of any sum that is exacted beyond what had been lent, solely on account of the loan;[1] and that the fact of this interest being moderate, or being exacted only from a rich man, or in order to further a commercial undertaking, in no degree alters its character.[2] This appears to have been the last official utterance of a Pope upon the subject, and although isolated theologians for some time attempted to stem the tide, their voices soon died away before the advancing spirit of Rationalism. Year by year what the old theologians had termed usury became more general. The creation of national debts made it the very pillar of the political system. Every great enterprise that was undertaken received its impulse from it, and the immense majority of the wealthy were concerned in it. Yet though it had long been branded as a mortal sin, and though mortal sin implied eternal separation from the Deity and the endurance of eternal and excruciating sufferings, the infallible voice continued silent. The decrees of the Councils remained indeed unchanged; the passages from Scripture and from

[1] 'Peccati genus illud quod usura vocatur, quodque in contractu mutui propriam suam sedem et locum habet, in eo est repositum quod quis ex ipsomet mutuo, quod suapte natura tantundem duntaxat reddi postulat quantum receptum est, plus sibi reddi velit quam est receptum.'—*Epistola Bened. XIV.*, in Concina, *Adversus Usuram*, p. 14.

[2] 'Neque vero ad istam labem purgandam ullum arcessiri subsidium poterit, vel ex eo quod id lucrum non excedens et nimium sed moderatum, non magnum sed exiguum sit; vel ex eo quod is a quo id lucrum solius causâ mutui deposcitur non pauper sed dives existat; nec datam sibi mutuo summam relicturus otiosam, sed ad fortunas suas amplificandas vel novis coëmendis prædiis vel quæstuosis agitandis negotiis, utilissime sit impensurus.'—*Ibid.*

the Fathers that had so long been triumphantly adduced continued precisely the same; but the old superstition faded steadily and almost silently away, till every vestige of it had disappeared. Laws, indeed, against usury still continued upon the statute-book, but they were intended not to prohibit interest, but only to regulate its rate; and as the principles of political economy were elucidated, this too began to pass away. At the close of the seventeenth century, Locke protested strongly against the attempt to reduce interest by law;[1] but the full investigation of the subject was reserved for the following century. It was remarked that Catherine of Russia having endeavoured to lower the general rate of interest from six to five per cent., her enactment had the effect of raising it to seven; and that Lewis XV., in the same manner, raised it from five to six when intending to reduce it to four.[2] In England both Adam Smith and Hume threw a flood of light upon the subject, though neither of them fully perceived the evil of the laws, which the first, indeed, expressly applauded.[3]

[1] See his *Considerations on the Lowering of Interest*, published in 1691—a tract which is, unfortunately, deeply tinged with the errors of the mercantile theory, but is full of shrewd guesses on the laws of money. Locke perceived that interest depended upon supply and demand, and that all attempts to reduce it below the natural level were pernicious or abortive. He thought, however, that the maximum should be fixed by law to prevent imposition, but that that maximum should be fixed above the natural rate. At a still earlier period Harrington saw the necessity of usury, but involved himself in great obcurity, and almost absurdity, when discussing it: see his *Prerogative of Popular Government*, c. 3.

[2] Storch, *Économie politique*, tom. iii. p. 137.

[3] Adam Smith wished the legal interest to be fixed a very little above the current rate of interest, as a check upon prodigality and rash speculation. This is still done in many countries, but Bentham has urged (Letter xiii., *On Usury*) that such a law is extremely detrimental to industrial pro-

In France, nine years before the 'Wealth of Nations,' Turgot had disclosed most of those evils; and he appears to have clearly seen that interest is not capricious, but bears a fixed relation to the general condition of society.[1] At last Bentham, in his famous 'Letters on Usury,' gave what will probably prove a deathblow to a legislative folly that has been in existence for 3,000 years. It has been observed by a Russian political economist that the Starovertsis, and some other dissenters from the Russian Church, still maintain that it is sinful to lend money at interest[2]—perhaps the last representatives of what was for many centuries the unanimous teaching of the Christian Church.

The importance of this episode depends not so much on the question that was immediately at issue—though that question, as we have seen, was far from being insignificant—as upon its influence in break-

gress, as each new enterprise is almost necessarily more hazardous than old-established ones, and therefore capitalists will only direct their capital to the former if the interest to be obtained from them is considerably higher than could be obtained from the latter. The belief that, while the ordinary commercial value of money should be unchecked by law, some restraint should be put upon the inordinate interest extorted by dishonest speculators from young and ignorant spendthrifts, has I think of late years been steadily gaining ground in England.

[1] Besides the *Mémoire*, Turgot noticed the subject in a very striking manner in his *Réflexions sur la Formation des Richesses*. Like nearly every one in his time, he fell into the error of believing that the abundance of the precious metals told upon the rate of interest; but this did not affect his main argument, and on the whole there is not much in Bentham that was not anticipated by Turgot. In Italy Genovesi, who was a contemporary of Turgot, advocated the abolition of usury laws. (Pecchio, *Storia della Economia Publica in Italia*, p. 114.)

[2] Storch, *Économie politique*, tom. iii. p. 175.

ing the authority of the Church. A second way in which the rise of the industrial classes that followed the Crusades tended towards the same object was by uniting nations of different religions in commercial relations. Before this time the intervention of the Pope had been the most effectual agent in regulating national differences, and General Councils formed the highest, and indeed almost the solitary, expression of a European federation. The benign influence of Catholicism was continually exercised in correcting the egotism of a restricted patriotism; and although this benefit was purchased by the creation of an intense animosity towards those who were without, and also by an excessive predominance of ecclesiastical influence, it would be unfair to forget its inestimable value. After the Crusades, however, a new bond of cohesion was called into existence, and nations were grouped upon a new principle. The appointment of consuls in the Syrian towns, to superintend the commercial interests of the Western nations, gave the first great impulse to international diplomacy[1] —an influence which for many centuries occupied

[1] I use this expression because that obscure subject which Papebrochius and Mabillon have investigated, and which they have called Diplomacy, is much more what we should now term the History of Charters. The rise and influence of consulships has been traced in English by Warden, in French by Borel, and in Latin by Steck. The subject has been also well noticed by Van Bruyssel, *Hist. du Commerce belge*, tom. i. p. 140; and the influence of diplomacy as superseding General Councils, by Littré, *Révolution, Conservation et Positivisme*, one of the ablest books the Positive School has ever produced. The distinction between the old and new sense of diplomacy is expressed respectively in the words 'la diplomatique' and 'la diplomatie,' the last of which is less than a century old. (See De Flassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie française*, Introd.) I may add that one of the first systems of navigation law depended upon an

an extremely important place in civilisation, but has of late years been in some degree waning before the doctrine of the rights of nationalities and before the increasing publicity of politics. The social and intellectual consequences of commercial intercourse were still greater. For while an intense sectarian spirit is compatible with the most transcendent abilities and with the most profound learning, provided those abilities and that learning are directed in a single channel, it can very rarely survive close contact with members of different creeds. When men have once realised the truth that no single sect possesses a monopoly either of goodness or of abilities—when they have watched the supporters of the most various opinions dogmatising with the same conviction, defending their belief with the same energy, and irradiating it with the same virtue—when they have learnt in some degree to assume the standing-point of different sects, to perceive the aspect from which what they had once deemed incongruous and absurd seems harmonious and coherent, and to observe how all the features of the intellectual landscape take their colour from the prejudice of education, and shift and vary according to the point of view from which they are regarded—when, above all, they have begun to revere and love for their moral qualities those from whom they are separated by their creed, their sense both of the certainty and the importance of their distinctive tenets will usually be impaired, and their intolerance towards others proportionately diminished. The spectacle of the contradictions around them, of

institution called the 'Consulship of the Sea,' which consisted of a tribunal of leading merchants authorised to determine disputes.

the manifest attraction which different classes of opinions possess to different minds, will make them suspect that their own opinions may possibly be false, and even that no one system of belief can be adapted to the requirements of all men; while, at the same time, their growing sense of the moral excellence that may be associated with the most superstitious creed will withdraw their minds from dogmatic considerations. For human nature is so constituted, that, although men may persuade themselves intellectually that error is a damnable crime, the voice of conscience protests so strongly against this doctrine, that it can only be silenced by the persuasion that the personal character of the heretic is as repulsive as his creed Calumny is the homage which dogmatism has ever paid to conscience. Even in the periods when the guilt of heresy was universally believed, the spirit of intolerance was only sustained by the diffusion of countless libels against the misbeliever, and by the systematic concealment of his virtues. How sedulously theologians at that time laboured in this task, how unscrupulously they maligned and blackened every leading opponent of their views, how eagerly they fanned the flame of sectarian animosity, how uniformly they prohibited those whom they could influence from studying the writings or frequenting the society of men of different opinions from their own, is well known to all who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history. The first great blow to this policy was given by the rise of the commercial classes that followed the Crusades. Orthodox Catholics came into close and amicable connection both with Greeks and with Mahometans, while their new pursuit made them, for the first time, look with favour upon

the Jews. It was these last who in the middle ages were the special objects of persecution, and it was also towards them that the tolerant character of commerce was first manifested.

The persecution of the Jewish race dates from the very earliest period in which Christianity obtained the direction of the civil power;[1] and, although it varied greatly in its character and its intensity, it can scarcely be said to have definitively ceased till the French Revolution. Alexander II. indeed, and three or four other Popes,[2] made noble efforts to arrest it, and more than once interposed with great courage, as well as great humanity, to censure the massacres; but the priests were usually unwearied in inciting the passions of the people, and hatred of the Jew was for many centuries a faithful index of the piety of the Christians. Massacred by thousands during the enthusiasm of the Crusades and of the War of the Shepherds, the Jews found every ecclesiastical revival, and the accession of every sovereign of more than usual devotion, occasions for fresh legislative restrictions. Theodosius, St. Lewis, and Isabella the Catholic—who were probably the three most devout

[1] As their latest historian says, 'Le christianisme ne prit une véritable consistance que sous le règne de Constantin; et c'est à dater de cette époque que commence, à proprement parler, pour les Juifs l'ère des persécutions religieuses.' (Bedarride, *Hist. des Juifs*, p. 16.) In this, however, as in other persecutions, the Arians were quite as bad as the orthodox. Constantius persecuted at least as much as Constantine, and the Spanish Visigoths more than either.

[2] On the liberality of several Popes to the Jews, see Bedarride, p. 260, on Alexander II., pp. 114–123. St. Bernard also laboured to assuage the persecution. Alexander VI. was especially generous to the Jews, and made great efforts to alleviate their sufferings—a fact that should be remembered in favour of a Pope for whom there is not much else to be said.

sovereigns before the Reformation—the Council of the Lateran, which led the religious revival of the thirteenth century, Paul IV., who led that of the sixteenth century, and above all the religious orders, were among their most ardent persecutors. Everything was done to separate them from their fellow-men, to mark them out as the objects of undying hatred, and to stifle all compassion for their sufferings. They were compelled to wear a peculiar dress, and to live in a separate quarter. A Christian might not enter into any partnership with them; he might not eat with them; he might not use the same bath; he might not employ them as physicians; he might not even purchase their drugs.[1] Intermarriage with them was deemed a horrible pollution, and in the time of St. Lewis any Christian who had chosen a Jewess for his mistress was burnt alive.[2] Even in

[1] For a long list of these prohibitions see a curious book, *De Judæis* (Turin, 1717), by Joseph Sessa (one of the judges appointed in Piedmont to regulate the affairs of the Jews), p. 10. As early as the reign of Constantine a Council of Elvira forbade Christians holding any communication with Jews. The Council of the Lateran compelled Jews to wear a separate dress; and this very simple provision, by bringing them prominently before the people in an intensely fanatical age, contributed greatly to rouse the passions of the Catholics, and to facilitate the massacres that ensued (see Rios *Études sur les Juifs d'Espagne* [trad. Maynabel], p. 109). St. Vincent de Ferrier persuaded the Spanish Government to enforce this decree against both Jews and Moors. (Paramo, *De Orig. Inq.* p 164.)

[2] *Œuvres de St.-Foix*, tom. iv. pp. 88, 89. A similar enactment was made in Spain (Rios, pp. 88, 89). It was also a popular belief that the blood of Jews was black and putrid, and the bad smell for which they were unhappily notorious, innate. There is a long discussion on this in Sessa. But perhaps the most curious instance of this order of superstitions is a statute of Queen Jeanne I., in 1347, regulating the houses of ill-fame at Avignon, in which, after providing with great detail for the accommodation of the Christians, it is enacted that no Jew shall

their executions they were separated from other criminals, and, till the fourteenth century, they were hung between two dogs, and with the head downwards.[1] According to St. Thomas Aquinas, all they possessed, being derived from the practice of usury, might be justly confiscated,[2] and if they were ever permitted to pursue that practice unmolested, it was only because they were already so hopelessly damned, that no crime could aggravate their condition.[3]

be admitted under severe penalties (Sabatier, *Hist. de la Législation sur les Femmes publiques*, p. 103). The authenticity of this statute has been questioned, but M. Sabatier seems to have succeeded in defending it, and he has shown that in 1408 a Jew was actually flogged at Avignon for the offence in question (pp. 105, 106). This extreme horror of Jews furnished Ulrich von Hutten with the subject of one of the happiest pieces of irony he ever wrote—the exquisite description of the mental agonies of a student of Frankfort, who, mistaking a Jew for a magistrate of the city, took off his hat to him, and on discovering his error was unable to decide whether he had committed a mortal or only a venial sin. (*Epistol. Obscurorum Virorum*, ep. 2.)

[1] Michelet, *Origines de Droit*, p. 368.

[2] See a curious letter from St. Thomas to the Duchess of Brabant, given at length in Van Bruyssel, *Hist. du Commerce belge*, tom. i. pp. 239, 240. On the general doctrine that property derived from usury may be confiscated by the civil power, see Paramo, *De Orig. Inquisit.* p. 167.

[3] There was a good deal of controversy in the middle ages about whether the Jews should be permitted to practise usury. The liberty seems to have been first openly granted in the commercial towns of Italy, but it gradually spread, and was admitted by some Popes. Sessa gives the reasons that were avowed by theologians: 'Usuræ Judaicæ tolerantur quidem ex permissione Principum et summorum Pontificum in Hebræis ut de gente deperditâ, et quorum salus est desperata, et ad eum finem ne Christiani fœnoris exercitio strangulentur a Christianis' (*De Judæis*, p. 9). The permission was granted in Piedmont in 1603. St. Lewis refused to permit the Jews to exercise usury (Troplong), and the Spanish rulers seem to have vacillated on the subject (Bedarride, pp. 192–194). There can be no doubt the monopoly of usury which the Jews possessed did more to enrich than all their persecutions to im-

Insulted, plundered, hated and despised by all Christian nations, banished from England by Edward I., and from France by Charles VI., they found in the Spanish Moors rulers who, in addition to that measure of tolerance which is always produced by a high intellectual culture, were probably not without a special sympathy for a race whose pure monotheism formed a marked contrast to the scarcely disguised polytheism of the Spanish Catholics; and Jewish learning and Jewish genius contributed very largely to that bright but transient civilisation which radiated from Toledo and Cordova, and exercised so salutary an influence upon the belief of Europe. But when, in an ill-omened hour, the Cross supplanted the Crescent on the heights of the Alhambra, this solitary refuge was destroyed, the last gleam of tolerance vanished from Spain, and the expulsion of the Jews was determined.

This edict was immediately due to the exertions of Torquemada, who, if he did not suggest it, at least by a singular act of audacity overcame the irresolution of the Queen;[1] but its ultimate cause is to be found

poverish them. For although, as Adam Smith observes, the current rate of interest should represent approximately the average of profits, this is only when it is free, and the exertions of divines and legislators in the middle ages had raised it far above the high rate it would then naturally have borne. It seems to have usually ranged between 25 and 40 per cent. In 1430 we find the Florentines, in order to reduce the current rate, admitting the Jews into their city whence they had previously been excluded, on the condition of their lending money as low as 20 per cent. (Cibrario, vol. iii. p. 318.) It is curious to observe how, while persecution prevented the Jews from ever amalgamating with other nations, the system of usury prevented them from ever perishing or sinking into insignificance.

[1] The Jews offered 30,000 ducats to remain. The Queen, it is said, for a time hesitated, but Torquemada, confronting

in that steadily increasing popular fanaticism which made it impossible for the two races to exist together. In 1390, about a hundred years before the conquest of Granada, the Catholics of Seville being excited by the eloquence of a great preacher, named Hernando Martinez, had attacked the Jews' quarter, and murdered 4,000 Jews,[1] Martinez himself presiding over the massacre. About a year later, and partly through the influence of the same eminent divine, similar scenes took place at Valentia, Cordova, Burgos, Toledo, and Barcelona.[2] St. Vincent de Ferrier, who was then stirring all Spain with his preaching, devoted himself especially to the Jews; and as the people zealously seconded the reasoning of the saint by massacring those who hesitated, many thousands were converted,[3] and if they relapsed into Judaism

her on the threshold of the palace with a crucifix in his hand, exclaimed, 'Judas sold his God for thirty pieces of silver—you are about to sell him for thirty thousand' (Bedarride and Prescott). The anecdote is related by Paramo, p. 144, only he does not specify the sum.

[1] Rios, *Études sur les Juifs d'Espagne*, p. 77. Rios says that the contemporary writers are unanimous about the number.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 79-82. Llorente, *Hist. de l'Inquisition*, tom. i. p. 141.

[3] Rios gives a delightfully Spanish complexion to all this: 'L'apparition de saint Vincent Ferrier devant le peuple juif avait été un fait véritablement prodigieux. Il avait apparu à leurs yeux comme un ange sauveur, et cette circonstance ne pouvait qu'être favorable à sa haute mission évangélique. Le 8 juin 1391, les rues de Valence se remplissaient du sang des Juifs, les boutiques étaient brûlées, les maisons de la Juiverie saccagées par une multitude effrénée, les malheureux Juifs couraient aux églises demandant le baptême, et ils étaient repoussés de toutes parts et ne rencontraient que la mort, quand au milieu de la populace saint Vincent Ferrier se présente, et élevant sa voix inspirée, il met un terme à cet horrible carnage. La multitude se tait. Les Juifs appelés par ce nouvel apôtre, qui se donna plus tard à lui-même le nom d'ange de l'Apocalypse, écoutent la parole divine et se

were imprisoned or burned. Scenes of this kind took place more than once during the fifteenth century, and they naturally intensified the traditional hatred, which was still further aggravated by the fact that most of the tax-gatherers were Jews. At last the Moorish war, which had always been regarded as a crusade, was drawing to a close, the religious fervour of the Spanish rose to the highest point, and the Inquisition was established as its expression. Numbers of converted Jews were massacred; others, who had been baptised during past explosions of popular fury, fled to the Moors, in order to practise their rites, and at last, after a desperate resistance, were captured and burnt alive.[1] The clergy exerted all their energies to produce the expulsion of the entire race, and to effect this object all the old calumnies were revived, and two or three miracles invented.[2]

When we take into consideration all these circumstances, and the condition of public feeling they evince, we can perhaps hardly blame Isabella for issuing the decree of banishment against the Jews, but at the same time it must be acknowledged that history relates very few measures that produced so vast an amount of calamity—calamities so frightful, that an old historian has scarcely exaggerated them

convertissent. . . . Tout cela contribua puissamment aux merveilleux résultats de sa prédication' (pp. 89, 90). St. Vincent was a Dominican, a very great preacher, and so very good that he always undressed in the dark lest he should see himself naked. For his miracles, his virtues, and the multitudes he converted, see his life in Spanish by Vincent Justiniano (Valentia, 1575). Paramo says that the Inquisitors discovered that no less than 17,000 of the converts of St. Vincent returned to Judaism (*De Orig. Inq.* p. 167).

[1] Twelve, however, who were captured at Malaga during the siege in 1485 were impaled by Ferdinand.

[2] They are detailed by Paramo.

when he describes the sufferings of the Spanish Jews as equal to those of their ancestors after the destruction of Jerusalem.[1] In three short months, all unconverted Jews were obliged, under pain of death, to abandon the Spanish soil.[2] Although they were permitted to dispose of their goods, they were forbidden to carry either gold or silver from Spain, and this measure made them almost helpless before the rapacity of their persecutors. Multitudes falling into the hands of the pirates who swarmed around the coast, were plundered of all they possessed, and reduced to slavery; multitudes died of famine or of plague, or were murdered or tortured with horrible cruelty by the African savages, or were cast back by tempests on the Spanish coast. Weak women, driven from luxurious homes among the orange groves of Seville or Granada, children fresh from their mothers' arms, the aged, the sick, and the infirm, perished by thousands. About 80,000 took refuge in Portugal, relying on the promise of the king; but even there the hatred of the Spaniards pursued them. A mission was organised. Spanish priests lashed the Portuguese into fury, and the king was persuaded to issue an edict which threw even that of Isabella into the shade. All the adult Jews were banished from Portugal; but first of all their children below the age of fourteen were taken from them to be educated as Christians. Then, indeed, the cup of bitterness was

[1] Picus Mirandola.

[2] It seems impossible to ascertain the number of the exiles with accuracy, for the Spanish historians vary greatly, from Cardoso who estimates it at 120,000, to Mariana who states it at 800,000. Paramo says some place it at more than 170,000, and others at 400,000 (p. 167). Justiniano says 420,000. Great numbers of the Jews avoided banishment by baptism.

filled to the brim. The serene fortitude with which the exiled people had borne so many and such grievous calamities gave way, and was replaced by the wildest paroxysms of despair. Piercing shrieks of anguish filled the land. Women were known to fling their children into deep wells, or to tear them limb from limb, rather than resign them to the Christians. When at last, childless and broken-hearted, they sought to leave the land, they found that the ships had been purposely detained, and the allotted time having expired, they were reduced to slavery, and baptised by force. By the merciful intervention of Rome most of them at last regained their liberty, but their children were separated from them for ever. A great peal of rejoicing filled the Peninsula, and proclaimed that the triumph of the Spanish priests was complete.[1]

Certainly the heroism of the defenders of every other creed fades into insignificance before this martyr people, who for thirteen centuries confronted all the evils that the fiercest fanaticism could devise, enduring obloquy and spoliation and the violation of the dearest ties, and the infliction of the most hideous sufferings, rather than abandon their faith. For these were no ascetic monks, dead to all the hopes and passions of life, but were men who appreciated intensely the worldly advantages they relinquished, and whose affections had become all the more lively on account of the narrow circle in which they were confined. Enthusiasm and the strange phenomena of ecstasy, which have exercised so large an influence

[1] Bedarride, pp. 291–301; Paramo, 235. Paramo says the Portuguese decree of banishment was simply changed for one of compulsory baptism.

in the history of persecution, which have nerved so many martyrs with superhuman courage, and have deadened or destroyed the anguish of so many fearful tortures, were here almost unknown. Persecution came to the Jewish nation in its most horrible forms, yet surrounded by every circumstance of petty annoyance that could destroy its grandeur, and it continued for centuries their abiding portion. But above all this the genius of that wonderful people rose supreme. While those around them were grovelling in the darkness of besotted ignorance; while juggling miracles and lying relics were the themes on which almost all Europe was expatiating; while the intellect of Christendom, enthralled by countless superstitions, had sunk into a deadly torpor, in which all love of enquiry and all search for truth were abandoned, the Jews were still pursuing the path of knowledge, amassing learning, and stimulating progress with the same unflinching constancy that they manifested in their faith. They were the most skilful physicians, the ablest financiers, and among the most profound philosophers; while they were only second to the Moors in the cultivation of natural science. They were also the chief interpreters to Western Europe of Arabian learning.[1]

[1] The very extensive Jewish literature of the middle ages is fully reviewed by Bedarride and Rios. Maimonides is of course the greatest name. M. Renan, in his essay on Averroes, has shown that nearly all the first translations into Latin of the works of Averroes were by Jews (chiefly by those of Montpellier, who were especially famous for their learning), and that Averroism took deep root in Jewish teaching. Maimonides wrote a letter on the vanity of astrology, which two popes applauded (Bedarride, p. 151). He was also distinguished for his liberal views about inspiration (Lee, *On Inspiration*, pp. 454–459). The controversial literature of the Jews directed against

But their most important service, and that with which we are now most especially concerned, was in sustaining commercial activity. For centuries they were almost its only representatives. By travelling from land to land till they had become intimately acquainted both with the wants and the productions of each, by practising money-lending on a large scale and with consummate skill, by keeping up a constant and secret correspondence and organising a system of exchange that was then unparalleled in Europe,[1] the Jews succeeded in making themselves absolutely indispensable to the Christian community, and in accumulating immense wealth and acquiring immense influence in the midst of their sufferings. When the Italian republics rose to power, they soon became the centres to which the Jews flocked; and under the merchant governments of Leghorn, Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, a degree of toleration was accorded that was indeed far from perfect, but was at least immeasurably greater than elsewhere. The Jews were protected from injury, and permitted to practise

Christianity was extremely voluminous. A catalogue of these works, and a description of many of them, is given in a little book, called *Bibliotheca Judaica Antichristiana*, by John Bernard de Rossi (Parmæ, 1800).

[1] A very old and general tradition ascribes the invention of the letter of exchange to Jews who, having been banished from France, had taken refuge in Lombardy. Nor does there seem to be anything of much weight to oppose to it, though some have contended that the Italians were the real inventors. At all events, the Jews appear to have been among the first to employ it. The earliest notice of letters of exchange is said to be in a statute of Avignon of 1243. In 1272 there was a Venetian law, 'De Litteris Cambii.' Compare on this subject Villeneuve Bargemont, *Histoire de l'Économie politique*, tom. i. pp. 277–279; Blanqui, *Hist. de l'Écon. pol.*, tom. i. p. 183; Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, liv. xxi. c. 20; and the tractate of Jules Thieurry, *La Lettre de Change* (Paris, 1862).

medicine and money lending unmolested, and public opinion, as well as the law, looked upon them with tolerance.[1]

The tolerant spirit the commercial classes manifested towards the Jews before the Reformation was displayed with equal clearness towards both Catholics and Protestants in the convulsions that followed it. In addition to the reasons I have already given, there were two causes actively sustaining the predisposition.

In the first place, the industrial character is eminently practical. The habit of mind that distinguishes it leads men to care very little about principles, and very much about results; and this habit has at least a tendency to act upon theological judgments.

In the second place, religious wars and persecutions have always proved extremely detrimental to industry. The expulsions of the Jews and Moors from Spain, and of the Huguenots from France, were perhaps the most severe blows ever directed against the industry of either country; while the nations which on these or similar occasions were wise enough to receive the fugitives, reaped an immediate and an enormous advantage. The commercial genius of the Jewish exiles was one of the elements in the developement of Leghorn, Pisa, and Ancona. Amsterdam owes a very large part of its prosperity to the concourse of heretics who had been driven from Bruges and from the surrounding country. The linen manufacture in Ireland, as well as many

[1] Bedarride, pp. 258, 259. The magnificent synagogue at Leghorn (probably the finest in existence) was erected by the Spanish Jews who took refuge in that city.

branches of English industry, were greatly stimulated by the skill and capital of the French refugees. French commerce received a powerful and long-sustained impulse from the good relations Francis I. had established with the Turks. It is not therefore surprising that Amsterdam, and in a less degree the other centres of commercial enterprise, should have been from an early period conspicuous for their tolerance, or that the diffusion of the industrial spirit should have everywhere prepared the way for the establishment of religious liberty.

Another consequence of the rise of the industrial spirit was the decay of the theological ideal of voluntary poverty which had created the monastic system. Immediately after the Crusades we find nearly all Europe rushing with extreme and long-sustained violence into habits of luxury. The return of peace, the contact with the luxurious civilisations of the East, the sudden increase of wealth that followed the first impetus of commerce, had all contributed to the movement. An extraordinary richness of dress was one of its first signs, and was encountered by a long succession of sumptuary laws. At the end of the thirteenth century we find Philip the Fair regulating with the most severe minuteness the number and quality of the dresses of the different classes of his subjects.[1] About the middle of the fourteenth century

[1] See this ordinance (which was issued in 1294) in Blanqui, *Hist. d'Économie politique*, tom. i. pp. 225–226. It provided, among other things, that dukes, counts, and barons, who have 6,000 livres rent, may have four robes a year, and their wives as many. Knights with 3,000 livres rent may have three. No member of the middle class may wear any ornament of gold or precious stone, or any dress that was green or grey. As M. Blanqui observes, articles of luxury would have been imported necessarily from foreign countries into France, which would necessitate an export of French gold—accord-

a parliament of Edward III. passed no less than eight laws against French fashions.[1] Even in Florence, among the officers of the republic, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, was one especially appointed 'to repress the luxury of women.'[2] Bruges, which had then risen to great wealth, became very famous in this respect; and the French king and queen having visited it early in the fourteenth century, it is related that the latter was unable to restrain her tears; for, as she complained, she 'found herself in presence of 600 ladies more queenly than herself.'[3] The fearful depopulation that was produced by the black death greatly strengthened the tendency. The wages, and consequently the prosperity, of the working classes rose to an unexampled height, which the legislators vainly tried to repress by fixing the maximum of wages by law;[4] while the immense fortunes resulting from the innumerable inheritances, and also that frenzy of enjoyment which is the natural reaction after a great catastrophe, impelled the upper classes to unprecedented excesses of luxury. This new passion was but part of a great change in the social habits of Europe, which was everywhere destroying the old rude sim-

ing to the current notions the greatest evil that could befall the country.

[1] Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 193. See, too, p. 179. More than a century later, the passion for dress reached Scotland, when the alarmed and indignant legislators enacted (in 1457) that the wives and daughters of merchants should 'be abuilzied ('dressed,' from 'habiller') gangand and correspondent for their estate, that is to say, on their heads shorteurches (a kind of cap) with little hudes as are used in Flanders, England, and other countries . . . and that na women weare tailes unfit in length, nor furred under but on the hailie daie.' (*Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 280–281.)

[2] Blanqui, tom. i. p. 250.

[3] Anderson, vol. i. p. 144.

[4] Wade, *History of the Middle and Working Classes.*

plicity, rendering the interiors of houses more richly and elaborately furnished, creating indoor life, increasing the difference between different ranks, producing a violent thirst for wealth, and making its display one of the principal signs of dignity.

There are few things more difficult to judge than those great outbursts of luxury that meet us from time to time in history, and which, whenever they have appeared, have proved the precursors of intellectual or political change. A sober appreciation of their effects will probably be equally removed from those Spartan, Stoical, or monastic declamations which found their last great representative in Rousseau, and from the unqualified eulogy of luxury in which Voltaire, Filangieri, and others have indulged. Political economy, by establishing clearly the distinction between productive and unproductive expenditure, and by its doctrine of the accumulation of capital, has dispelled for ever the old illusion that the rich man who lavishes his income in feasts or pageants is contributing involuntarily to the wealth of the community; and history unrolls a long catalogue of nations that have been emasculated or corrupted by increasing riches. But, on the other hand, if luxury be regarded as including all those comforts which are not necessary to the support of life, its introduction is the very sign and measure of civilisation; and even if we regard it in its more common but less definite sense, its increase has frequently marked the transition from a lower to a higher stage. It represents the substitution of new, intellectual, domestic, and pacific tastes for the rude warlike habits of semi-barbarism. It is the parent of art, the pledge of peace, the creator

of those refined tastes and delicate susceptibilities that have done so much to soften the friction of life. Besides this, what in one sense is a luxury soon becomes in another sense a necessary. Society, in a highly civilised condition, is broken up into numerous sections, and each rank, except the very lowest, maintains its position chiefly by the display of a certain amount of luxury. To rise to a higher level in the social scale, or at least to avoid the discomfort and degradation of falling below his original rank, becomes the ambition of every man; and these motives, by producing abstinence from marriage, form one of the principal checks upon population. However exaggerated may have been the apprehensions of Malthus, the controversy which he raised has at least abundantly proved that, when the multiplication of the species is checked by no stronger motive than the natural disinclination of some men to marriage, when the habitual condition of a large proportion of the inhabitants of a country that is already thickly inhabited is so low that they marry fearlessly, under the belief that their children can fare no worse than themselves, when poor-laws have provided a refuge for the destitute, and when no strong religious motive elevates celibacy into a virtue, the most fearful calamities must ensue. Looking at things upon a large scale, there seem to be two, and but two adequate, checks to the excessive multiplication of the species: the first consists of physical and moral evils, such as wars, famines, pestilence, and vice, and those early deaths which are so frequent among the poor; the second is abstinence from marriage. In the middle ages, the monastic system, by dooming many thousands to perpetual celibacy, produced this

abstinence, and consequently contributed greatly to avert the impending evil.[1] It is true that the remedy by itself was very inadequate. It is also true that, considered in its economical aspect, it was one of the worst that could be conceived; for it greatly diminished the productive energies of society, by consigning immense numbers to idleness, and by diffusing a respect for idleness through the whole community, but still the monastic system was in some measure a remedy; and, as it appears to me, the increased elaboration of social life rendering the passion for wealth more absorbing, was one of the necessary preliminaries of its safe abolition. That elaboration was effected after the Crusades, and the change it has produced is very remarkable. The repressive influence upon population that was once exercised by a religious system resting on the glorification of voluntary poverty, and designed to mortify the natural tendencies of mankind, is now exercised by that increased love of wealth which grows out of the multiplication of secular aims, or, in other words, out of the normal developement of society.

But, putting aside the incidental effects of luxury upon population, there can be no doubt that its effects in stimulating the energies of mankind, by investing material advantages with a new attraction, have sometimes been very great and very beneficial. For the love of wealth and the love of knowledge are the two main agents of human progress; and, although the former is a far less noble passion than the latter,

[1] This has been noticed in a very forcible but, of course, one-sided manner by De Maistre, who recurs to the subject again and again in his works; also by Villeneuve Bargemont, *Économie politique chrétienne*.

although, in addition to the innumerable crimes it has produced, it exercises, when carried to excess, a more than common influence in contracting and indurating the character, it may well be doubted whether it is not, on the whole, the more beneficial of the two. It has produced all trade, all industry, and all the material luxuries of civilisation, and has at the same time proved the most powerful incentive to intellectual pursuits. Whoever will soberly examine the history of inventions, of art, or of the learned professions, may soon convince himself of this. At all events, the two pursuits will usually rise together. The great majority of mankind always desire material prosperity, and a small minority always desire knowledge; but in nations that are undeveloped, or are declining, these desires are unable to overcome the listlessness that is general. There is then no buoyancy in the national character. All lively curiosity, all the fire and energy of enterprise are unknown. Men may love wealth, and even sacrifice moral principles to attain it, but they are unable to emancipate themselves from the empire of routine, and their languid minds recoil with the same antipathy from novelty, whether it comes to them in the form of industrial enterprise, or of intellectual innovation. This is even now very much the condition of Spain and of some other nations, and during the greater part of the middle ages it was the general condition of Christendom. In such a state of society, the creation of a spirit of enterprise is the very first condition of mental as of material progress; and when it is called into existence in one department, it will soon be communicated to all. The ardent passion for luxury that followed the Crusades—the

new tastes, new ideas, and new fields of enterprise that were suddenly made popular—produced it in Europe; and the impulse that began in industry was soon felt in knowledge. In the Roman empire, which rested on slavery, luxury produced idleness. In the fourteenth century it stimulated industry, and aroused a strong feeling of opposition to that monastic system, which, by its enormous developement, was a serious impediment to progress.

This opposition, which was at first created by the increased energy of laymen, was intensified by the deterioration of the monks. At one time, as I have already observed, they had been the great directors of labour. But when their numbers and their wealth had immensely increased, their first enthusiasm passed away, and multitudes thronged the monasteries simply to escape the burdens of life. Besides this, the priesthood had become intimately allied with the nobles, who are always opposed to the industrial classes. The alliance was in part the result of special circumstances, for the Crusades were directed conjointly by priests and nobles; and it was during the Crusades that the aristocracy obtained its distinct and complete organisation. It was also in part the consequence of a certain harmony which exists between the theological and the aristocratic spirit. Both raising the past far above the present, regard innovation with extreme dislike, and both measure excellence by a different rule from personal merit.

If I have been fortunate enough to carry the reader with me through the foregoing arguments, the importance of industry in influencing theological history will have become apparent. We have seen that a great religious change is effected not by direct

arguments but by a predisposition to receive them, or, in other words, by a change of sympathies and bias. We have also seen that the industrial spirit which became prominent early in the fourteenth century produced such a change. It did so in three ways. It arose in a society in which the laity were crouching in abject submission to the priesthood, and it developed and raised to honour the practice of money-lending, which the priesthood had invariably anathematised. It arose in a society in which the duty of religious intolerance was regarded as an axiom, and it produced a tendency towards toleration by uniting men of different creeds in amicable intercourse, by elevating to honour on account of their commercial merits the people who were most persecuted on account of their creed, by making men concentrate their attention mainly on practice rather than on theory, and by calling into existence an order of interests which persecution seriously endangered. It, in the last place, made men look with aversion upon the monastic ideal which was the very centre of the prevailing theology. In all these ways it proved the precursor of the Reformation, and in all these ways it harmonised with the spirit of Rationalism.

Commercial enterprise, bearing in its train these intellectual consequences, spread rapidly over Europe. The accidental discovery at Amalfi of a manuscript of Roman laws is said to have produced the navigation laws;[1] the invention of the compass rendered long voyages comparatively secure; and every shore, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, was soon fringed with harbours. In the thirteenth and fourteenth

[1] Pecchio, *Storia della Economia Publica in Italia* (Lugano, 1849), p. 11.

centuries we find the first mercantile companies established in England.[1] At a still earlier period Belgium had entered into relations with more than thirty kingdoms or states.[2] The consular system, which emanated from the commercial republics, and which was designed for the special protection of merchants, advanced rapidly in importance.[3] As early as the thirteenth century the consuls of Italy, Spain, and France had in most countries acquired an extended and recognised authority. England, in the fourteenth century, followed the example,[4] and about the same time the jurisdiction which had formerly been confined to seaports was extended to the towns in the interior. From these consulships, or perhaps from the papal legations which were already known, arose at last the institution of resident ambassadors, which completed the organisation of diplomacy, though its influence was not fully acquired till much later, in the coalitions resulting from the rivalry of Francis and Charles V.[5] The Hanseatic League repressed piracy, associated commerce with the first efflores-

[1] Anderson, *Hist. of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 117. The first English commercial companies were 'the Merchants of the Staple,' and 'the Merchants of St. Thomas à Becket.'

[2] Van Bruyssel, *Hist. du Commerce belge*, tom. i. p. 234.

[3] See the stages of its development in Warden, *On Consular Establishments*.

[4] The earliest notice Macpherson has been able to find of an English Consul is in 1346 (*Annals of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 536).

[5] Before this time ambassadors were sent only on occasions of emergency. The first instance of a resident ambassador seems to have been in 1455, when Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan, established one at Genoa, and towards the close of the century the institution became somewhat common in Italy (Cibrario, *Economia Politica del Medio Evo* [Torino, 1842], vol. i. p. 319). It was also about this time that the use of cipher in diplomacy became usual. (*Ibid.* De Plassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie française*, Introd.)

cence of political liberty, and by the treaty of Stralsund, in 1370, made commercial interests pre-eminent in the North; while in the South the Venetians, anticipating in some measure the doctrines of later economists, sketched the first faint outlines of the laws that govern them.[1] At last the Medici appeared, and surrounded industry with the aureoles of genius and of art. For the first time the intellectual capital of Italy was displaced, and Rome itself paled before that new Athens which had arisen upon the banks of the Arno. An aristocracy, formed exclusively from the trading and mercantile classes,[2] furnished the most munificent and discerning patrons art had ever found; almost every great intellectual movement was coloured by its influence, and its glory was reflected upon the class from which it sprang.

It may here be advisable to rise for a moment above the industrial movement with which we have hitherto been occupied, and to endeavour to obtain a general conception of the different streams of thought which were at this time shooting across Europe. Such a review, which will be in part a summary of conclusions I have established in previous chapters, will help to

[1] M. Blanqui has collected some very remarkable evidence of this (*Histoire d'Économie politique*, tom. i. pp. 244–270.) The Lombards also occasionally manifested extremely enlightened views on these subjects (see Rossi, *Économie politique*, tom. i. p. 260), and Milan, perhaps longer than any other great town in Europe, was exempt from the mediæval system of corporations. However, the first Italian writer of considerable merit on Political Economy was probably Serra, who was a Neapolitan, and it was at Naples that the first Professorship of Political Economy in Europe was established in 1754 by the munificence of the Florentine Intieri.

[2] As early as 1282, a magistracy had been constituted at Florence exclusively of merchants; and the example was soon followed by Sienna, and in a great measure by Venice and Genoa. (See Blanqui, tom. i. p. 245; Rossi, tom. i. p. 266.)

show how admirably the industrial movement harmonised with the other tendencies of the age, and also how completely the Reformation was the normal consequence of the new condition of society.

While, then, the progress of industry was producing an innovating, tolerant, and anti-monastic spirit, two great revivals of learning were vivifying the intellectual energies of Christendom.

The first consisted of that resuscitation of the classical writings which began about the twelfth century, and culminated in the labours of Erasmus and the Scaligers. This revival broke the intellectual unity which had characterised the middle ages. It introduced a new standard of judgment, a new ideal of perfection, a new order of sympathies. Men began to expatiate in an atmosphere of thought where religious fanaticism had never entered, and where the threatenings of the dogmatist were unknown. The spell that had bound their intellects was broken, and the old type of character gradually destroyed. The influence of the movement passed from speculative philosophy to art, which was then the chief organ of religious sentiments, and, under the patronage of the Medici, a profound change took place in both painting and architecture, which intensified the tendency that produced it.

The second revival was produced by the action of Moorish civilisation. It was shown chiefly in an increased passion for natural science, which gradually substituted the conception of harmonious and unchanging law for the conception of a universe governed by perpetual miracles. With this passion for science, astrology rose into extraordinary repute, and it necessarily involved a system of fatalism, which, in its

turn, led the way to a philosophy of history. From the same quarter arose many of those pantheistic speculations about the all-pervasive soul of the universe, to which the writers of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were so passionately addicted.[1] In all these ways, Moorish influence contributed to shake the old faith, to produce new predispositions, and thus to prepare the way for the coming change. Roger Bacon, who was probably the greatest natural philosopher of the middle ages, was profoundly versed in Arabian learning, and derived from it many of the germs of his philosophy.[2] The fatalism of the astrologers and the pantheism of Averroes tinged some of the most eminent Christian writings long after the dawn of the Reformation. In one respect, Mahometan influence had somewhat anticipated the classical revival. The Mahometan philosophers were intense admirers of Aristotle; and it was chiefly through translations made by the Jews from the Arabic versions, that the knowledge of that philosopher penetrated to Europe.

There was another influence, growing partly out of the industrial movement, and partly out of the revival of classical learning, at this time acting upon Europe, which I have not yet had occasion to mention, which many readers will deem far too trivial for notice, but which, nevertheless, appears to me so extremely important, both as a symptom and a cause, that I shall venture, at the risk of being accused of unpardonable digression, to trace some of the leading stages of its

[1] Many of these views were almost identical with those of Mesmer and his followers. (See Bertrand, *Hist. du Magnétisme animal en France*, pp. 13–17.)

[2] Sharon Turner's *Hist. of England*, vol. iv. pp. 39–40.

progress. I mean that change in the character of public amusements, produced chiefly by the habits of luxury, which took place about the fifteenth century, and which produced the revival of the theatre.

No one can question the immense importance in the intellectual history of mankind of an institution which has elicited the dramas of Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Calderon, Lope de Vega, Corneille, Molière, Racine, Voltaire, Goethe, Schiller, Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, and which has invariably appeared as one of the most conspicuous signs and causes of a rising civilisation. Combining the three great influences of eloquence, of poetry, and of painting, it has probably done more than any other single agent to produce that craving after the ideal, that passionate enthusiasm of intellect, out of which all great works of imagination have sprung. It has been the seed-plot of poetry and romance, and it has exercised a considerable though less direct influence over eloquence. The age of Demosthenes and Æschines was also the age in which the theatre of Athens was the object of such a passionate devotion, that no politician was permitted even to propose the abolition of its subsidy.[1] The golden age of Roman eloquence was also the golden age of the Roman theatre, and the connection between acting and eloquence was one of the favourite subjects of the discussions of the time.[2]

[1] See the *Olynthiacs*.

[2] Roscius even wrote a book on this subject, but it has unfortunately not come down to us. He kept a school of declamation, which was attended by the ablest orators of his time. The passion for the theatre is said to have come to Rome from Egypt, and Batyllus, the greatest actor of the Augustan period, was from Alexandria. See on this subject a curious dissertation, 'De luxu Romanorum,' in Grævius, *Thesaurus Antiq. Rom.*, tom. viii.

In modern days, Burke declared, in an assembly in no degree inferior to any of Greece or of Rome, that there was probably no orator among those he addressed, who did not owe something of his skill to the acting of Garrick.[1] And this amusement, which has ever proved one of the chief delights, and one of the most powerful incentives of genius, had, at the same time, the rare privilege of acting with equal power upon the opposite extreme of intellect, and is even now almost the only link connecting thousands with intellectual pursuits.

But the aspect in which the history of the theatre is most remarkable, is perhaps to be found in its influence upon national tastes. Everyone who considers the world as it really exists, and not as it appears in the writings of ascetics or sentimentalists, must have convinced himself that in great towns, where multitudes of men of all classes and characters are massed together, and where there are innumerable strangers separated from all domestic ties and occupations, public amusements of an exciting order are absolutely necessary; and that, while they are often the vehicle and the occasion of evil, to suppress them, as was done by the Puritans of the Commonwealth, is simply to plunge an immense portion of the population into the lowest depths of vice. National tastes, however, vary with the different stages of civilisation, and national amusements undergo a corresponding modification; combats of men and animals being, for the most part, the favourite type in the earlier stages, and dramatic representations in the later ones. The history of amusements is thus important, as a

[1] Murphy's *Life of Garrick*.

reflection of the history of civilisation, and it becomes still more so when we remember that institutions which are called into existence by a certain intellectual tendency usually react upon and intensify their cause.

In this, as in most other respects, we find a strong contrast existing between the two leading nations of antiquity. The Athenians, who for a long period repelled gladiatorial spectacles with disgust, were passionately devoted to the drama, which they carried to the very highest point of perfection, and from which they derived no small amount of their intellectual culture. The Romans, on the other hand, who regarded every subject from a military point of view, had long prohibited theatrical representations, except those which formed part of the worship of the gods. The first public theatre was erected by Pompey, and he only evaded the censure of the severe moralists of his time by making it a single story of a building that was ostensibly a temple of Venus. The Stoics, and the representatives of the old republican spirit, denounced the new amusement as calculated to enervate the national character. Public opinion branded actors as infamous, and, as a necessary consequence, they speedily became so. The civilisation of the Empire made the theatre at last extremely popular; but that civilisation was the most corrupt the world had ever seen, and the drama partook of the full measure of its corruption. A few rays of genius from the pens of Seneca, Plautus, or Terence, flashed across the gloom; but Rome never produced any dramatists comparable to those of Greece, or any audience at all resembling that which made the theatre ring with indignation because Euripides had

inserted an apology for mental reservation into his 'Hippolytus,' or had placed a too ardent panegyric of wealth in the mouth of Bellerophon. After a time the position of an actor became so degraded, that it was made a form of perpetual servitude,[1] and no one who had embraced that profession was permitted at any future time to abandon it. The undisguised sensuality reached a point which we can scarcely conceive. Women were sometimes brought naked upon the stage.[2] Occasionally an attempt was made to amalgamate theatrical amusements with those bloody spectacles to which the people were so passionately devoted, and the tragedy was closed by the burning of a criminal, who was compelled to personate Hercules.[3] At the same time, by a curious association of ideas, the theatre was still intimately connected with religious observances; the temple was often the

[1] Nero, however, made energetic efforts to relieve the actors from the stigma attached to them (as he did also to alleviate the sufferings of the slaves), and Gibbon has noticed the great honour in which he held the Jewish actor Aliturus, and the repeated and successful efforts of that actor to obtain a relaxation of the persecutions of the Jews. Under Nero, too, lived and died (when only fourteen) a lovely and gifted actress named Eucharis—the first who appeared on the Greek stage, which Nero had instituted—who seems to have won more affection and left a deeper impression than almost any other who died so young. Her charms are recorded in perhaps the most touching of all the epitaphs that have descended to us from antiquity, and her beautiful features formed one of the last ideals of expiring art. (Visconti, *Iconographie ancienne*, p. 287.)

[2] See the evidence of this collected by Sabatier, *Hist. de la Législation sur les Femmes publiques*, pp. 45–47; Magnin, *Origines du Théâtre*, tom. i. pp. 284–287; and Lebrun, *Discours sur le Théâtre*, pp. 79–82. This last author tries as much as possible to attenuate the facts he admits, in order that the invectives of the Fathers might fall with their full force on the modern theatre. The Floral games were in this respect the worst.

[3] Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, lib. i. c. 10.

scene of its orgies, and the achievements of the gods the subject of representation.

It is certainly not surprising that the early writers of Christianity should have directed all their eloquence against such an institution as this. They inveighed against it as the school of profligacy, and a centre of idolatry; and they dwelt, in language which it is impossible to read without emotion, upon the duty of those who might be called, at any moment, to endure for their faith the most horrible forms of torture and of death, abstaining from whatever could enervate their courage or damp their zeal. Mingled with these noble exhortations we find no small amount of that monastic spirit which regards pleasure as essentially evil, and also two or three arguments which perhaps represent the extreme limits of human puerility. Tertullian, having enumerated with great force and eloquence many of the most horrible vices of the theatre, adds that at least the Almighty can never pardon an actor, who, in defiance of the evangelical assertion, endeavours, by high-heeled boots, to add a cubit to his stature, and who habitually falsifies his face.[1]

The position of public amusements in the early history of Christianity is extremely important. On the one hand, the austerity with which the Christians condemned them was probably one of the chief causes of the hatred and consequent persecution of which the early Church was the victim, and which contrasts so remarkably with the usually tolerant character of polytheism. On the other hand, when Christianity had attained its triumph, when the intellectual and

[1] *De Spectaculis*, cap. xxiii

moral basis of paganism was completely sapped, and when the victorious Church had begun to exhibit something of the spirit from which it had suffered, the theatre and the circus became the last strongholds of the dying faith. Partly because they had actually emanated from the pagan worship, and partly because the Christian Councils and Fathers denounced them with an absolute and unqualified severity, they were soon regarded as the chief expression of paganism; and the people, who endured with scarcely a murmur the destruction of their temples and the suppression of their sacrifices, flew to arms whenever their amusements were menaced. The servitude, indeed, by which the actor was enchained for life to the theatre, was soon abrogated in the case of those who desired to become Christians;[1] and the bishops refused to baptise any actor who persisted in his profession, and excommunicated any Christian who adopted it;[2] but the theatres were still thronged with eager spectators. Indeed, one curious enactment of the Theodosian Code provides that some of the temples should be saved from the general destruction, because they

[1] *Cod. Theod.* lib. xv. tit. 7, 1, 8. If the emancipated actress turned out badly, she was to be dragged back to the stage and kept there till she was 'a ridiculous old woman' (*ridicula anus*).

[2] Neander, *Church History*, vol. ii. p. 370. An old council forbade Christian women marrying actors. The actors, however, at a later period claimed one saint as their patron. This was St. Genetus, who was an actor in the reign of Diocletian. According to the legend, he was acting the part of a Christian in a piece which was designed to turn the new religion to ridicule, when, between the acts, he saw a vision, which converted him, and he accordingly proclaimed his allegiance to Christ upon the stage. The emperor and the audience at first loudly applauded, imagining that this was part of the play; but when they discovered the truth, the actor was put to death.

were associated with public games.[1] When the bishops were manifestly unable to suppress the public games, they directed all their energies to restricting them to days that were not sacred. St. Ambrose succeeded in obtaining the abolition of Sunday representations at Milan, and a similar rule was at last raised to a general law of the empire.[2]

It is remarkable, however, when considering the relations of Christianity and Paganism to the theatre, that Julian, who was by far the most distinguished champion of the latter, formed in this respect a complete exception to his co-religionists. His character was formed after the antique model, and his antipathy to public amusements was almost worthy of a bishop. Libanius, it is true, has left a long disquisition in praise of pantomimic dances, which, he maintained, were of a far higher artistic merit than sculpture, as no sculptor could rival the grace and beauty of the dancers; but on this subject he received no encouragement from his master. It has been ingeniously, and, I think, justly remarked, that this austerity of Julian, by placing him in direct opposition to that portion of the population which was opposed to Christianity, was one of the causes of the failure of his attempts to rally the broken forces of paganism.

After a time the Roman theatre languished and passed away. The decline was partly the result of the ceaseless opposition of the clergy, who during the middle ages were too powerful for any institution to resist their anathema, but still more, I think, of the invasion of the barbarians, which dissolved the old

[1] *Cod. Theod.* xvi. 10, 3.
[2] *Lebrun*, pp. 117–118; *Cod. Theod.* xv. 5, 5.

civilisation, and therefore destroyed the old tastes. The theatre soon lost its attraction; it lingered, indeed, faintly for many centuries, but its importance had passed away, and about the end of the thirteenth century most antiquaries seem to think the last public theatres were destroyed. The amusements of men were of an entirely different, and, for the most part, of a warlike character. Battle and the imitations of battle, boisterous revels, the chase, and, after the Crusades, the gaming-table, became the delight of the upper classes; while the poor found congenial recreation in bear-baiting, bull-fighting, and countless similar amusements—in fairs, dances, perambulant musicians, sham fights, and rude games.[1] Besides these, there were numerous mountebanks, who were accustomed to exhibit feats of mingled agility and buffoonery, which were probably the origin of the modern pantomime, and in which, as it has been shown by a high authority,[2] there is reason to believe a dress very similar to that of our harlequins was employed. It is probably to these mountebanks, or possibly to the troubadours or wandering minstrels, who had then become common, that St. Thomas Aquinas referred in

[1] Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the English People.* Muratori, *Antiq. Ital.*, Dissert. 29. In Italy the sham fights were carried on on a vast scale and with wooden swords, and were the cause of many deaths. Amusements somewhat similar to those which were once popular in Italy are said to continue in Russia Storch, *Écon. polit.*, tom. iii. p. 403.

[2] Riccoboni, *Hist. du Théâtre italien depuis l'an* 1500 *jusqu'à l'an* 1660, tom. i. pp. 4–6. The author of this remarkable book (who was known professionally under the name of Lelio) was one of the greatest Italian actors of his time. He travelled much from theatre to theatre, and in the different cities he visited ransacked the public libraries for works bearing upon his history. His book was originally written in French, and is dedicated to Queen Caroline of England.

a passage which excited a fierce controversy in the seventeenth century. In discussing the subject of amusement, the saint suggested the question whether the profession of an 'actor' was essentially sinful; and, having enumerated some special circumstances that might make it so, he answers the question in the negative,[1] 'because,' as he says, 'recreation is necessary to mankind,' and also because 'it had been revealed to the blessed Paphnutius that 'a clown[2] was to be his companion in heaven.'

Such, then, was the character of public amusements before the revival of learning. The time, however, was at hand when a profound change, fraught with momentous consequences to the Church, was manifested; and it is worthy of notice, that while that

[1] He says distinctly, 'Officium histrionum, quod ordinatur ad solatium hominibus exhibendum, non est secundum se illicitum.' It appears certain that when this was written there were no public theatres or dramatic representations, except the religious ones. At the same time, it is impossible to draw a clear line between the public recitation of verses or the exhibitions of mountebanks on the one hand, and the simplest forms of the drama upon the other. Bossuet has cited a passage from St. Thomas's work *De Sententiis*, in which he speaks of the exhibitions that had 'formerly taken place in the theatres.' At all events, the saint was not very favourable to these 'histriones,' for he speaks of gains that have been acquired 'de turpi causâ, sicut *de meretricio et histrionatu*.' See on this subject Concina, *De Spectaculis*, pp. 36–41; Lebrun, *Discours sur le Théâtre*, pp. 189–194; Bossuet, *Réflexions sur la Comédie*, §§ 22–25.

[2] 'Joculator.' Bossuet, however, says that the *Acts* of St. Paphnutius show that this was simply a perambulant flute-player. After all, Bossuet is obliged to make the following admission: 'Après avoir purgé la doctrine de saint Thomas des excès dont on la chargeoit, il faut avouer avec le respect qui est dû à un si grand homme, qu'il semble s'être un peu éloigné, je ne dirai pas des sentimens dans le fond, mais plutôt des expressions des anciens Pères sur le sujet des divertissemens.' (*Réflexions sur la Comédie*, § 31.)

change was ultimately caused by the advance of civilisation, the Church itself was its pioneer. The first revival of the theatre is undoubtedly to be found in the religious plays. From the earliest times men seem to have been accustomed to throw into dramatic forms the objects of their belief; and the pagan mysteries, which were essentially dramatic,[1] retained their authority over the popular mind long after every other portion of the ancient worship was despised. The first biblical play on record is on Moses, and is the composition of a Jew named Ezekiel, who lived in the second century. The second is a Greek tragedy on the Passion, by St. Gregory Nazianzen. The religious ceremonies, and especially those for Christmas, Epiphany, and Holy Week, became continually more dramatic, and the monks and nuns after a time began to relieve the monotony of the cloister by private representations. The earliest known instance of this is of the tenth century, when a German abbess named Hroswitha composed two or three dramas, with a religious object, but imitated, it is said, in part from Terence, which were acted by the nuns. The subject of one of them is curious. A hermit had brought up in the ways of piety a beautiful girl, but she rebelled against his authority, neglected his counsels, and fled to a house of ill fame. The hermit, having discovered the place of her resort, assumed the dress and the manners of a soldier, penetrated to her retreat, supported his character so skilfully that he deceived its

[1] Mackay's *Religious Developement of the Greeks and Hebrews*. vol. ii. pp. 286–297. Besides the drama, it is probable that the gladiatorial spectacles (which are of Etruscan origin) were originally religious. They seem at first to have been celebrated at the graves, and in honour of the dead.

inmates, and at last found an opportunity of reclaiming his ward.[1]

In the extreme weariness of the conventual life, amusements of this kind were welcomed with delight, and, though often and severely censured, they continued in some monasteries till far into the eighteenth century.[2] The form, however, which they generally assumed was not that of secular dramas with a religious tendency, but of mysteries or direct representations of scenes from Scripture or from the lives of the saints. Until the latter part of the thirteenth century they were exclusively Latin, and were usually acted by priests in the Churches; but after this time they assumed a popular form, their religious character speedily declined, and they became at last one of the most powerful agents in bringing the Church, and indeed all religion, into disrepute.[3] The evidence of this is not to be found in the representations of the Almighty that were so frequent upon the stage;[4] for these, though inexpressibly shocking in our eyes, were perfectly in harmony with the intellectual condition of the time; but rather in the gross indecency which the worst days of the Roman theatre had scarcely surpassed,[5] and perhaps still more in the strange

[1] See Villemain, *Moyen Âge*; Martonne, *Piété du Moyen Âge*; Leroy, *Études sur les Mystères*, p. 41.

[2] Concina, who published his work, *De Spectaculis*, in 1752, at the request of Benedict XIV., mentions that the custom still continued in some monasteries; and he devoted a dissertation to proving that monks who laid aside their ecclesiastical dress to personate laymen were guilty of mortal sin.

[3] See the collections of these by Hone, Jubinal, Jacob, &c.; and the works of Leroy, Suard, and Collier upon their history.

[4] On which see Malone, *Hist. of the English Stage*, pp. 12–13. Some curious examples of it have been collected by Hone; and also in Strutt's *Hist. of the Manners of the People of England*, vol. iii. pp. 137–140.

[5] Some striking instances of

position that was assigned to Satan. At first the mysteries had probably contributed much to the religious terrorism. The glare and smoke of the fire of hell were constantly exhibited, and piercing shrieks of agony broke upon the ear. Very soon, however, Satan was made to act the part of a clown. His appearance was greeted with shouts of laughter. He became at once the most prominent and most popular character of the piece, and was emancipated by virtue of his character from all restraints of decorum. One of the most impressive doctrines of the Church was thus indissolubly associated in the popular mind with the ridiculous, and a spirit of mockery and of satire began to play around the whole teaching of authority.

It is difficult, indeed, to say how far these rude dramatic representations contributed to that disruption of old religious ties that preceded and prepared the Reformation. At a very early period those strange festivals, the Feast of Fools and the Feast of Asses,[1] had introduced into the churches indecent

this indecency, which indeed is sufficiently manifest in most of the mysteries, are given by Jacob in his Introduction to his collection of Farces. Wherever the seventh commandment was to be broken, the actors disappeared behind a curtain which was hung across a part of the stage; and this is the origin of the French proverbial expression about things that are done 'derrière le rideau.' More than once the Government suppressed the sacred plays in France on account of their evil effects upon morals. In England matters seem to have been if possible worse and Warton has shown that on at least one occasion in the fifteenth century, Adam and Eve were brought upon the stage strictly in their state of innocence. In the next scene the fig-leaves were introduced. (Malone's *History of the English Stage*, pp. 15, 16.)

[1] The Feast of Fools and the Feast of Asses are said to have originated (though probably under other names) in the Greek Church about 990. (Malone's *Hist. of the English Stage*, p. 9.) La Mère Sotte, in France, originated, or at least

dances, caricatures of the priesthood, and even a parody of the Mass; and the mysteries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries carried the same spirit far and wide. But what I desire especially to notice is, that their popularity had a real connection with that material prosperity which was a consequence of the industrial developement we are considering. This growing passion for an order of amusements in some degree intellectual, this keen relish for spectacles that addressed themselves especially to the imagination, was the beginning of that inevitable transition from the rude, simple, warlike, unartistic, unimaginative tastes of barbarism to the luxurious, refined, and meditative tastes of civilisation. Coarse and corrupt as they were, these early plays reflected the condition of a society that was struggling feebly into a new phase of civilisation, and which at the same time, though still deriving its conceptions from the Church, was tending surely and rapidly towards secularisation.

The change was first effected in Italy and France. In those countries, which were then the centres of material prosperity, the dramatic tastes had naturally been most developed, and the mysteries had attained an extraordinary popularity. A modern Italian bibliographer has been able even now to collect more than one hundred different pieces of this kind, which were represented in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[1] About the middle of the fifteenth

became popular, during the quarrel between the King of France and the Pope, at the beginning of the tenth century. (Monteil, *Hist. des Français des divers États*, tom. iii. p. 342, ed. 1853.)

[1] *Bibliografia delle Antiche Rappresentazioni Italiane Sacre e Profane stampate nei Secoli XV e XVI, dal Colomb de Batines* (Firenze, 1852). One

century the exhibitions of the mountebanks began to be thrown into a systematic form. A complete story was exhibited, and the harlequin rose to great prominence as chief actor.[1] We find, too, a few representations of Pagan fables, and also some plays that were termed impromptus, in which the outline of a plot was sketched by the author, but the dialogue left to the ingenuity of the actor. Besides these, dialogues, or discussions of the nature of farces,[2] became common; and having passed from Italy to France, they there assumed the dimensions of regular dramas, sometimes of very considerable merit. One of them, the famous farce of 'Patelin,' which was probably composed about 1468 by Peter Blanchet, an advocate of Poitiers, still holds its position upon the French stage.[3] The directors of the religious plays attempted to meet these new rivals by the invention of semi-religious 'moralities,' which were properly

of these mysteries, the *S. Giovanni e Paolo*, was written by Lorenzo de' Medici himself (Roscoe, *Lorenzo de' Medici*, ch. v.).

[1] Riccoboni, tom. i. p. 89. One of the most famous of the early harlequins was Cecchino, who is also celebrated for having published at Venice, in 1621, perhaps the first defence of the theatre. He was ennobled by the Emperor of Germany.

[2] These farces, in the earliest and simplest forms, were called 'contrasti' in Italian, or 'débats' in French. De Batines has made a list of several which were translated from Italian into French; e.g. the discussions between wine and water, between life and death, between man and woman, &c. Italian actors sometimes migrated to France, and in 1577 we find a regular Italian company, called I Gelosi, there.

[3] As a comic opera, and also, I believe, as a play. The popularity of the farce of *Patelin* produced *Le Nouveau Patelin* and *Le Testament de Patelin*, both of which have been reprinted by Jacob. Hallam says (*Hist. of Lit.*, vol. i. p. 216) that the farce of *Patelin* was first printed in 1490. There is extreme uncertainty resting upon the early chronology of the drama; scarcely any two authorities agree upon the subject.

representations of allegorical figures of virtues and vices,[1] and were intended to act the part of a compromise; but the farces soon became the dominating form, and all other performances sank into secondary importance.[2] Latin plays were also sometimes acted by the scholars in the colleges, a practice which was afterwards made very popular by the Jesuits.

This was the first stage of the movement. The second was the creation of secular plays of a higher order of merit, which completely superseded and destroyed the mysteries.[3] Like the former, this advance emanated chiefly from the commercial civilisation

[1] The term 'morality,' however, was very loosely used. Jacob has reprinted an old play, called *La Moralité de l'Aveugle et du Boiteux*, which is nothing more than a farce. From the religious plays the personifications passed to the ballets, in which they still sometimes appear. An old French poem describes in rapturous terms the performance of a certain Madame de Brancas, in the character of Geometry, in a ballet on the seven liberal arts, danced before Louis XIV. in 1663.

[2] Farces appear also to have been the chief form of dramatic literature in Spain in the fifteenth century. See Bouterwek's *Hist. of Spanish Literature*. They were followed by eclogues.

[3] Some remains, however, of the mysteries continue to the present day, especially in the villages of the Tyrol. There is still, too, a great 'passion play,' as it is termed, celebrated every tenth year at the little village of Oberammergau, in Bavaria, near the frontiers of the Tyrol, which, though it is not more than 300 years old, and though it is almost entirely devoid of grotesque scenes, may be on the whole looked upon as a representative of the mediæval plays. It consists of scenes from the Passion (beginning at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and ending with the Ascension), between which tableaux vivants, representing incidents from the Old Testament typical of the Passion, are displayed. A chorus, like those of the Greek plays, sings hymns concerning the connection between the type and the antitype. When I saw it in 1860, the play lasted for 7¼ hours, and commanded the attention of an immense audience to the close.

of Florence, but it is extremely remarkable that the leaders of the Church in Italy were among its most ardent supporters. The first regular Italian comedy appears to have been the 'Calandra,' and its author was the Cardinal Bibbiena, who had long been secretary to Lorenzo de' Medici.[1] The play was probably written in the last few years of the fifteenth century, when the author was still young, but it at all events did not impede his advancement in the Church. The two first Italian tragedies were the 'Sophonisba' of Trissino, which was imitated from Euripides, and the 'Rosimunda' of Ruccellai, which was imitated from Senèca. The 'Sophonisba' was acted for the first time at Vicenza, about 1514, and was soon afterwards represented at Rome under the special patronage of Leo X., who appointed its author ambassador at the court of the Emperor Maximilian. The 'Rosimunda' was first acted, in the presence of the same Pope, at Florence, in 1515.[2] The earliest instance of a secular musical drama is the 'Orpheus' of Politiano, which was composed for the amusement and acted in the presence of the Cardinal Gonzaga of Mantua.[3] A few years later we find Clement VII.

[1] Riccoboni, tom. i. pp. 32, 33. The *Calandra* is now nearly forgotten, but its author will always be remembered as the subject of two of the noblest of the portraits of Raphael — one at Florence, and the other at Madrid.

[2] Compare Riccoboni, tom. ii. pp. 9, 10; and Sismondi, *Hist. de la Littérature du Midi*, tom. ii. pp. 188–199. The two pieces seem to have been acted nearly at the same time; but the *Sophonisba* was not printed for some years afterwards. Ruccellai also wrote a play called *Orestes*, which, however, was not brought at this time on the stage.

[3] Roscoe's *Lorenzo de' Medici*, ch. v.; Hogarth's *Memoirs of the Opera*, pp. 6–8. Of course, as Hallam has observed, recitative not being yet invented, the music was confined to choruses and songs scattered throughout the piece.

present with the Emperor Charles V., at Bologna, at the representation of the comedy of 'The Three Tyrants,' by Ricci.[1] As a natural consequence of this patronage, the Italian theatre at its commencement does not appear to have been very hostile to the Church, and in this respect forms a marked contrast to the theatre of France. The 'Eugénie' of Jodelle, which was the first regular comedy acted on the French stage, was throughout what many of the older farces had been, a bitter satire upon the clergy.[2]

One of the most important consequences of this revival of the theatre was the partial secularisation of music. This art, to which the old Greeks had ascribed so great a power over both mind and body, and which some of their states had even made an essential element of the civil government,[3] had for many centuries been entirely in the hands of the Church. Almost all the music that really deserved the name was ecclesiastical, and all the great names in musical history had been ecclesiastics. St. Ignatius, according to the legend, having heard the angels singing psalms in alternate strains before the throne of God, introduced the practice of antiphons. St. Ambrose

[1] Riccoboni, tom. i. p. 183.

[2] See Charles, *La Comédie en France au seizième Siècle* (1862). Riccoboni, however, asserts that Molière took the character, and even some of the incidents and speeches, of his *Tartuffe* from an old Italian play called *Doctor Bachtone* (tom. i. p. 137).

[3] Among the Arcadians, for example, music was compulsory, and the one district in which this custom fell into desuetude was said to have sunk far below the surrounding civilisation. There is a singularly curious chapter on the effects ascribed to music among the Greeks, in Burney's *History of Music*, vol. i. pp. 173–194. The legends of Orpheus charming hell, Arion appeasing the waves, and Amphion moving the stones by music, as well as 'the music of the spheres' of Pythagoras, will occur to everyone.

regulated the church music for the diocese of Milan, and St. Gregory the Great for the remainder of Christendom. St. Wilfrid and St. Dunstan were the apostles of music in England. In the eleventh century, the monk Guido of Arezzo invented the present system of musical notation. Nearly at the same time, the practice of singing in parts, and combining several distinct notes in a single strain,[1] which is the basis of modern harmonies, first appeared in the services of the Church. From a very early period music had been employed to enhance the effect of the sacred plays, and as it continued to occupy the same position when the drama had been secularised, St. Philip Neri, in 1540, in order to counteract the new attraction, originated at Rome the oratorio. About twenty years later, Palestrina, a chaplain of the Vatican, reformed the whole system of Church music. These exertions would perhaps have retained for it something at least of its ancient ascendency, but for the invention in 1600 of recitative, which, by rendering possible complete musical dramas, immediately created the opera, withdrew the sceptre of music from the Church, and profoundly altered the prevailing taste. From this time the star of St. Cecilia began to wane, and that of Apollo to shine anew. Those 'Lydian and Ionic strains,' which Plato so jealously excluded from his republic, and which Milton so keenly appreciated, were heard again, and all Italy thrilled with passion beneath their power. Venice especially found in them the most faithful expression of her character, and no less than three hundred and fifty

[1] Called originally 'discantus.' The exact date of its invention is a matter of great controversy. It is said to have been suggested by the varied tones of the organ.

different operas were represented there between 1637 and 1680. In France the opera was introduced at the desire of Cardinal Mazarin; and it is remarkable that Perrin, who wrote the first French operas, was a priest; that Cambert, who assisted him in composing the music, was a church organist; and that nearly all the first actors had been choristers in the cathedrals. From this time the best singers began to desert the churches for the theatre. In England the musical dramas known under the name of masques elicited some of the noblest poetry of Ben Jonson and of Milton.[1]

Another way in which the Church exercised, I think, an indirect influence upon the stage, is not quite so obvious as the preceding one. Whatever opinion may be held on the general question of the comparative merits of the classical and the Gothic architecture, it is at least certain that the latter was immeasurably superior in suggesting the effects of immense distances—in acting, not simply on the taste, but also on the emotions, by a skilful employment of all the means of illusion which an admirable sense of the laws of perspective can furnish. The Greek temple might satisfy the taste, but it never struck any chord of deeper emotion, or created any illusion, or suggested any conception of the Infinite. The eye and the mind soon grasped its proportions, and realised the full measure of its grandeur. Very different is the sentiment produced by the Gothic cathedral, with its almost endless vistas of receding arches,

[1] See Burney's *Hist. of Music*; Castil-Blaze, *Chapelle musique des rois de France*; Hogarth's *Hist. of the Opera*; Montoil, *Hist. des Français (XVII^e Siècle)*; the notice of Palestrina in Hallam's *Hist. of Literature*; and the *Essays on Musical Notation*, by Vitet and Coussemaker.

with its high altar rising conspicuous by a hundred lights amid the gloom of the painted windows, while farther and farther back the eye loses itself in the undefined distance amid the tracery of the gorgeous chancel, or the dim columns of Our Lady's chapel. The visible there leads the imagination to the invisible. The sense of finiteness is vanquished. An illusion of vastness and awe presses irresistibly on the mind. And this illusion, which the architecture and the obscurity of the temple produce, has always been skilfully sustained in Catholicism by ceremonies which are pre-eminently calculated to act upon the emotions through the eye.

Now it is surely a remarkable coincidence, that while Christian architecture is thus indisputably superior to pagan architecture in creating the illusion of distance, the modern theatre should be distinguished by precisely the same superiority from the ancient one. A fundamental rule of the modern theatre is, that the stage should be at least twice as deep as it is broad. In the theatres of antiquity, the stage was five or six times as broad as it was deep.[1] It resembled the portion which is now exhibited when the curtain is down. The wall that closed it in, instead of being concealed, was brought prominently before the spectator by rich sculptures, and illusion was neither sought nor obtained. In the modern theatre, our present system of decoration only advanced by slow degrees, from the rude representations of heaven

[1] The stage of Orange, which is probably the most perfect Roman theatre in existence, is 66 yards broad and 12 deep. (See Vitet's *Essay on the Antiquities of Orange*, in his *Etudes sur l'Histoire de l'Art.*) The length of the stage of Herculaneum is greater than that of San Carlo at Naples, but its depth is only a few feet.

and hell, that were exhibited in the mysteries, to the elaborate scenery of our own day; but still the constant progress in this direction exhibits a conception of the nature of the spectacle, which is essentially different from that of the Greeks, and is probably in a great measure due to the influence of ecclesiastical ceremonies upon the taste.

It is not difficult to perceive the cause of the favour which Leo and his contemporaries manifested to the theatre. They belonged to a generation of ecclesiastics who were far removed from the austere traditions of the Church, who had thrown themselves cordially into all the new tastes that luxury and revived learning had produced, and who shrank with an undisguised aversion from all religious enthusiasm, from all intolerance of the beautiful. Their lives were one long dream of art and poetry. Their imaginations, matured and disciplined by constant study of the noblest works of Grecian genius, cast a new colouring upon their profession, and adorned with a pagan beauty every creation of the Church. Such men as these were but little likely to repress the intellectual passion that arose almost simultaneously in Italy, France, and Spain,[1] and created the modern theatre. But when the teaching of Luther had thrilled through Europe, a new spirit was infused into the Vatican. The

[1] The Spanish theatre very early rose to perfection, and, after 1600, Spanish tragi-comedies soon became dominant, even in Italy. (See Riccoboni's history of the movement; and Bouterwek's *Hist. of Spanish Literature*.) In this review I have not entered into an examination of the English theatre, for two reasons: first, because its growth was almost entirely isolated, while the dramatic literatures of Italy, Spain, and France were closely connected; and, secondly, because my present object is to trace the relations of Catholicism and the drama.

intellectualist and the art critic were replaced by men of saintly lives but of persecuting zeal, and a fierce contest between the Church and the theatre began, which continued till near the close of the eighteenth century, and ended in the complete victory of the latter.

The doctrine of the Church on this subject was clear and decisive. The theatre was unequivocally condemned, and all professional actors were pronounced to be in a condition of mortal sin, and were, therefore, doomed, if they died in their profession, to eternal perdition.[1] This frightful proposition was enunciated with the most emphatic clearness by countless bishops and theologians, and was even embodied in the canon law and the rituals of many dioceses.[2] The Ritual of Paris, with several others, distinctly pronounced that actors were by their very employment necessarily excommunicated.[3] This was

[1] The following was the decision of the doctors of the Sorbonne in 1694: 'Les comédiens, par leur profession comme elle s'exerce, sont en état de péché mortel.'—*Dict. des Cas de Conscience*, de Lamet et Fromageau, tom. i. p. 803.

[2] See an immense mass of evidence of this collected in Desprez de Boissy, *Lettres sur les Spectacles* (1780); Lebrun, *Discours sur la Comédie*; Concina, *De Spectaculis*.

[3] 'Arcendi [a sacra communione] sunt publice indigni, quales sunt excommunicati, interdicti, manifeste infames ut meretrices, concubinarii, comœdi.' (Quoted by Concina, *De Spectaculis*, p. 42. See also Lebrun, *Discours*, p. 34.) Some theologians, in order to reconcile their sentiments with the passage from St. Thomas that I have quoted, said that it was actors of immoral pieces that were excommunicated, but they added that the condition of the theatre was such that all actors fell under the censure. Molière was regarded as peculiarly and pre-eminently bad. Racine was far from innocuous; and Bossuet distinctly maintained that any piece was immoral which contained a representation of love, however legitimate its character. (See his *Réflexions sur la Comédie*.)

the sentence of the Church upon those whose lives were spent in adding to the sum of human enjoyments, in scattering the clouds of despondency, and charming away the weariness of the jaded mind. None can tell how many hearts it has wrung with anguish, or how many noble natures it has plunged into the depths of vice. As a necessary consequence of this teaching, the sacraments were denied to actors who refused to repudiate their profession, and, in France at least, their burial was as the burial of a dog.[1] Among those who were thus refused a place in consecrated ground was the beautiful and gifted Le Couvreur, who had been perhaps the brightest ornament of the French stage. She died without having abjured the profession she had adorned, and she was buried in a field for cattle upon the banks of the Seine. An ode by Voltaire, burning with the deep fire of an indignant pathos, has at once avenged and consecrated her memory.

It is hard for those who are acquainted with the habits of modern Roman Catholic countries to realise the intense bitterness which theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries manifested towards the theatre. Molière, whose plays were continually cited as among the most signal instances of its depravity, was the object of especial denunciation, and when he died, it was only with extreme difficulty that

[1] 'L'Église condamne les comédiens, et croit par là défendre assez la comédie: la décision en est précise dans les rituels (*Rit. de Paris*, pp. 108–114), la pratique en est constante. On prive des sacremens, et à la vie et à la mort, ceux qui jouent la comédie s'ils ne renoncent à leur art; on les passe à la sainte table comme des pécheurs publics; on les exclut des ordres sacrés comme des personnes infâmes; par une suite infaillible, la sépulture ecclésiastique leur est déniée.'—Bossuet, *Réflexions sur la Comédie*, § xi.

permission could be obtained to bury him in consecrated ground.[1] The religious mind of Racine recoiled before the censure. He ceased to write for the stage when in the zenith of his powers, and an extraordinary epitaph, while recording his virtues, acknowledges that there was one stain upon his memory —he had been a dramatic poet.[2] In 1696, and again in 1701, on the occasion of the jubilee, the actors entreated the pope to relieve them from the censures of the canon law, but their request was unavailing; and when, upon the recovery of Louis XIV. from a serious illness, every other corporation at Paris offered up a Te Deum, they were especially excluded.[3] The rule of the Church depriving actors of the sacrament of marriage deliberately consigned them to concubinage. An attempt was at one time made to evade the rule, the actor who desired to marry renouncing his profession but returning to it by an order of the king as soon as the ceremony was completed; but the Archbishop of Paris effectually prevented the evasion, refusing to accord marriage to any actor who could not produce an official paper guaranteeing him against ever returning to the stage, and the same archbishop suspended a priest from his functions because he had inadvertently married an actor.[4]

[1] Lebrun relates this with much exultation. Speaking of Molière, he says: 'Ce qui est constant, c'est que sa mort est une morale terrible pour tous ses confrères, et pour tous ceux qui ne cherchent qu'à rire—un peu de terre obtenu par prière, c'est tout ce qu'il a de l'Église, et encore fallut-il bien protester qu'il avoit donné des marques de repentir. Rosimond étant mort subitement en 1691, fut enterré sans clergé, sans lumière, et sans aucune prière, dans un endroit du cimetière de St.-Sulpice où l'on met les enfans morts sans baptême.' (*Discours sur la Comédie*, ed. 1731, p. 259.)

[2] This marvellous production is given in full by Desprez de Boissy, tom. i. pp. 510–512. Its author was named Tronchon.

[3] Ibid. p. 124.

[4] See on this very scandalous

few years the Spanish Catholics were the arbiters and the directors of commerce, and although the effects of their ascendency have not even yet passed away, the prosperity of Spain was speedily eclipsed. At a time when she seemed on the highway to an almost boundless wealth, she sank into the most abject poverty. Her glory was withered, her power was shattered, her fanaticism alone remained.

There are several considerations that explain this apparent anomaly. The first is, I think, to be found in the erroneous economical doctrine which became the mainspring of Spanish legislation.

Although it would undoubtedly be a gross exaggeration to regard the Italian republics as having arrived at the knowledge of the true laws that govern wealth, there can be no question that their policy was far more in conformity with the principles of political economy than that of any of their successors till after the time of Quesnay and Smith. The exquisite practical skill they possessed, and also the peculiarity of their position, which made most of them entirely dependent upon commerce, and consequently the natural enemies of protective privileges, saved them from the worst legislative errors of the age; and, indeed, it has been the just boast of Italian economists, that, if we except Serra, Genovesi, and perhaps one or two others, even their speculative writers have always been singularly free from the errors of that 'mercantile system' which in other countries was so long supreme. It was not until Spain had risen to power, and the stream of American gold had begun to inundate Europe, that the doctrine upon which that fatal system rests became the centre of commercial legislation.

To state this doctrine in the simplest form, it was believed that all wealth consisted of the precious metals, and that therefore a country was necessarily impoverished by every transaction which diminished its metallic riches, no matter how much it may have added to its other possessions. If, therefore, two nations exchanged their commodities with a view of increasing their wealth, the single object of each was to regulate the transaction in such a manner that it might obtain a larger amount of money than it before possessed, or, in other words, that the value of its non-metallic exports should be greater than of its imports. But as the excess of exports over imports on one side implied a corresponding excess of imports over exports on the other, it followed that the interests of the two nations were diametrically opposed, that the loss of one was the condition and measure of the gain of the other, and that to the nation which was unable to incline what was termed the 'balance of commerce' in its favour, the entire transaction was an evil. It followed also that the importance of native productions was altogether subordinate to that of the export or import of gold.

From these principles three important practical consequences were drawn which contributed greatly to the downfall of Spain. In the first place, the whole energy both of the government and people was concentrated upon the gold mines, and manufactures and almost all forms of industry sank into neglect. In the next place, the colonies were speedily ruined by an elaborate system of commercial restrictions and monopolies, devised with the vain hope of enriching the mother-country, and some

Rome,[1] Anglicanism has always been singularly free from the taint of fanaticism;[2] nor is it, I believe, too much to add, that her forbearance has received its reward, and that, if we except the period of depravity that elapsed between the Restoration and the publication of the work of Jeremy Collier in 1698, and which may be justly ascribed in a great measure to the reaction against Puritanism, the English theatre has been that in which the moralist can find least to condemn.

The creation of the secular theatre was one of the last results of the industrial supremacy of Italy. A succession of causes, into which it is not now necessary to enter, had corroded that political system, to which the world is so deeply indebted; and the discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope by Gama, and of America by Columbus, together with some other causes, directed the stream of commerce in new channels. By the time when the effects of these discoveries began first to be felt, the Reformation had divided Christendom into two opposing sections, and the important question arose,

[1] On the decrees of the French Protestants against the theatre, see Lebrun, p. 255. Calvin at Geneva was equally severe, and his policy long after found an enthusiastic defender in Rousseau. In England, one of the most atrocious acts of tyranny of which Charles I. was guilty, was elicited by a book called the *Histriomastix*, of Prynne, and one of the first effects of the triumph of the Puritans was the suppression of the theatre.

[2] I have mentioned the way in which Molière, Lulli, and Le Couvreur were treated in France. As a single illustration of the different spirits of Catholicism and Anglicanism, I may mention the fate of their English parallels—Shakespeare, Lawes, and Mrs. Oldfield. No murmur of controversy ever disturbed the grave of Shakespeare, and the great poet of Puritanism sang his requiem. Lawes and Mrs. Oldfield both rest in Westminster Abbey, to which the latter was borne with almost regal pomp.

to which of these sections the sceptre of industry would fall.

It must, I think, be acknowledged, that to a spectator of the sixteenth century no proposition could seem more clear than that the commercial supremacy of Europe was destined to be exercised by Catholicism. The two great discoveries I have mentioned had both fallen to the lot of the intensely Catholic nations of the Spanish peninsula. Spain especially exhibited a combination of advantages which it would be very difficult to parallel in history. Her magnificent colonies opened out a boundless prospect of wealth, and she seemed to possess all those qualities and capacities that were requisite for their developement. The nation was in the zenith of its power. The glories of Granada still rested upon it. Charles V. had united the imperial sceptre with that of Spain, had organised a vast navy, had constituted himself the recognised head of the Catholic interests, had humbled that French power which alone could imperil his ascendency, and had acquired the reputation of the most consummate politician of the age. If we add to this, that the passion for wealth had never been more strongly exhibited than by the Spaniards, it would seem as though no element of commercial greatness was wanting. Reasoning *à priori*, it would appear natural to conclude that Spain was about to embark in a long and glorious career of commerce, that she would incline the balance of material prosperity decisively to the side of the religion of which she was the champion, but that the commercial spirit would at last act upon and modify her religious fanaticism.

None of these results followed. Although for a

Gradually, however, these amusements were extended to other seasons of the year; and even the opera, in obedience to the wishes of the people, was introduced. At last, in 1671, a public opera-house was built at Rome; but female performers were long strictly prohibited, and their places supplied by eunuchs—an unfortunate race, which came in consequence into great request in the Holy City.[1]

The man who did more than any other to remove the stigma that rested upon actors, was unquestionably Voltaire. There is, indeed, something singularly noble in the untiring zeal with which he directed poetry and eloquence, the keenest wit and the closest reasoning, to the defence of those who had so long been friendless and despised. He cast over them the ægis of his own mighty name, and the result of his advocacy was shown in the enactment by which the French Revolutionists, at a single stroke, removed all the disqualifications under which they laboured. The position actors have since conquered in almost every country, and the extent to which the theatre has become a recognised institution, must be manifest to everyone. Among the many illustrations of the impotence of modern ecclesiastical efforts to arrest the natural current of society, there are few more curious than is furnished on the opening night of the Roman theatre, when the cardinal-governor of Rome appears, as the representative of the pope, to sanction the entertainment by his presence, to listen to the sweet songs of the opera sung by female singers, and to watch the wreathings of the dance.

[1] Desprez de Boissy, tom. ii. pp. 234–236.

I trust the reader will pardon the great length to which this disquisition on the drama has extended. It is not altogether of the nature of a digression, because, although an institution like the theatre cannot be regarded as entirely the creation of any one nation, it certainly owes its first impulse and some of its leading characteristics to that union of an industrial and intellectual civilisation which attained its culmination under the Medici. Nor is it without an important bearing on the subject of my work, because the successive transformations I have reviewed furnish one of the most striking examples of that process of gradual secularisation which, under the influence of the rationalistic spirit, is displayed in turn in each department of thought and action. Besides this, there are few more powerfully destructive agents than customs or institutions, no matter how little aggressive, which a Church claiming supreme authority endeavours to suppress, and which have nevertheless secured their position in the world. By the simple fact of their existence, they at first divide the allegiance of mankind, and at last render obsolete a certain portion of ecclesiastical teaching, and thereby impart a character of mobility and flexibility to the whole. In this respect Protestantism has been far less affected by the change than her rival, for Protestantism does not claim the same coercive authority, and can, therefore, in a measure assimilate with the developements of society, and purify and temper when it cannot altogether control. It must be acknowledged also, that while the Calvinistic section of the Reformed Churches has ever displayed a bigotry on the subject of amusements, which is at least equal to that of the Church of

When a lawyer, named Huerne de la Mothe, ventured, in 1761, to denounce as scandalous the refusal of marriage to actors, and also to say something in defence of their profession, his work was burnt by the hand of the executioner, and his name erased from the list of advocates.[1] Lulli, the first great musical composer of France, could only obtain absolution by burning an opera he had just composed.[2]

Yet in spite of all this the theatre steadily advanced, and as the opposition was absolute and unequivocal its progress was a measure of the defeat of the Church. In France, although the law pronounced actors infamous, and consequently excluded them from every form of public honour and employment, and although till far into the eighteenth century custom prohibited those who occupied any magisterial appointment from attending the theatre, the drama retained an undiminished popularity. In Spain it appears to have secured a certain measure of toleration by throwing itself into the arms of the Church. Calderon infused into it the very spirit of the Inquisition. The sacred plays continued after they had been abolished in almost every other country; and although Mariana and some other leading theologians denounced all dramatic entertainments, they were unable to procure

case Grimm et Diderot, *Mémoires historiques*, tom. iii. pp. 327–328. And yet these priests had the audacity to reproach actors with their immorality! The council of Illiberis in the fourth century prohibited any Christian woman from marrying an actor (Lebrun, *Discours*, p. 157).

[1] See the curious Arrêt du Parlement, in Desprez de Boissy, tom. i. pp. 473–481.

[2] Hogarth, *Memoirs of the Opera*, p. 28.

their final suppression.[1] The opera, it is true, was somewhat severely treated, for some divines having ascribed to it a period of pestilence and of drought, it was for a time abolished;[2] but it at last secured its position in Spain. The Italians at all times thronged the theatre with delight. Even the Romans exhibited such a marked passion for this form of amusement, that the popes were obliged to yield. At first dramatic entertainments were only permitted at Rome during the carnival, and Benedict XIV., while according this permission, addressed a pastoral to the bishops of his kingdom to assure them that he did it with extreme reluctance to avoid greater evils, and that this permission was not to be construed as an approval.[3]

[1] Philip II., however, and Philip IV. banished all actors from Spain (Boissy, *Lettres sur les Spectacles*, tom. i. pp. 483–484); and the venerable and miracle-working Father Posadà, at a later period, caused the destruction of the theatre of Cordova. (Concina, *De Spect.* p. 178.) On the extent to which actors laboured to win the favour of the Church by religious plays and by singing at the Church festivals, see the indignant remarks of Mariana, *De Rege*, pp. 406–419.

[2] Buckle, *Hist.*, vol. i. p. 347, note. In the same way, Lebrun ascribes the earthquakes that desolated ancient Antioch to the passion of the inhabitants for the theatre (*Discours*, pp. 132, 133). The English bishops, in 1563, attributed the plague to the theatres (Froude's *Hist.* vol. vii. p. 519).

[3] See an energetic extract which Concina has prefixed to his book. Some of the cardinals, however, were less severe, and in the first half of the seventeenth century the musical parties of the Cardinal Barberini were very famous. It was probably there, and certainly at Rome, that Milton met Leonora Baroni, who was one of the first of the long line of great Italian opera-singers, and to whom he, with a very unpuritanical gallantry, addressed three Latin poems (Hogarth, *Memoirs of the Opera*, pp. 17, 18). These carnival dramas excited the great indignation of the Calvinist Dallæus (Concina, pp. 302–303). The Italians do not seem to have been so violent against the theatre as the French priests, though De Boissy has collected a rather long list of condemnations.

she lost her best agriculturists; vast plains were left uninhabited, except by banditti, and some of the most important trades were paralysed for ever. By the expedition of the Armada, that naval supremacy which, since the discoveries of the Cape passage and of America, had made commerce exclusively maritime, implied commercial supremacy, passed from her hands, and was soon divided between the Protestant nations of England and Holland. By her persecutions in the Netherlands, she produced a spirit of resistance that baffled her armies, destroyed her prestige, and resulted in the establishment of another State, distinguished alike for its commercial genius, its bravery, and its Protestantism.

There were, of course, other circumstances which accelerated or aggravated the downfall of Spain; but the really dominating causes are all, I think, to be found under the economical or theological heads I have noticed. It is well worthy of attention how they conspired, acting and reacting upon one another, to destroy that political structure which was once so powerful, and which appeared to possess so many elements of stability. Nor can we question that that destruction was an almost unmingled benefit to mankind. Blind folly, ignoble selfishness, crushing tyranny, and hideous cruelty, mark every page of the history of the domination of Spain, whether we turn to the New World or to the Netherlands, or to those glorious Italian cities which she blasted by her rule. During the period of her ascendency, and especially during the reigns of Charles V. and Philip II., who were the most faithful representatives of her spirit, she was guilty of an amount of persecution before which all the enormities of Roman emperors fade into

insignificance. She reorganised the accursed institution of slavery on a gigantic scale, and in a form that was in some respects worse than any that had before existed; she was the true author of the mercantile theory and of the colonial policy which have been the sources of disastrous wars to every European nation; she replaced municipal independence by a centralised despotism, and the aristocracy of industry by the aristocracy of war;[1] and she uniformly exerted the whole stress of her authority to check on all subjects and in all forms the progress of enquiry and of knowledge. Had she long continued to exercise the assimilating, absorbing, and controlling influence of a great Power, the advancement of Europe might have been indefinitely retarded. Happily, however, Providence, in the laws of history as in the laws of matter, tends ever to perfection, and, annexing fatal penalties to the resistance of those laws, destroys every obstacle, confounds those who seek to arrest the progress, and, by the concurrence of many agencies, effects the objects it designs.

Before leaving the subject of Spanish industry, I may notice one article that was at this time brought into Europe, not because it was itself very important, but because it was the beginning of a great social change that was fully accomplished about a century afterwards—I mean the introduction of hot drinks. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards imported chocolate from Mexico. Rather more than half a century later, tea was introduced from China and Japan. It had been noticed by Marco Polo as early as the thirteenth century, but it was probably first brought to Europe by the Jesuit

[1] Blanqui, *Hist. de l'Écon. pol.*, tom. i. p. 277.

the Portuguese bore the fatigue without the slightest injury, he imagined that by introducing the latter he was performing an act of undoubted philanthropy; and thus it came to pass, that one whose character presents an almost ideal type of beneficence became a leading promoter of negro slavery.[1]

The traffic once organised, and encouraged by the government, spread rapidly. Its monopoly was granted to the Belgians, who sold it to the Genoese; but merchants of Venice, Barcelona, and England, had all an early share in the adventure. The first Englishman who took part in it was a certain John Hawkins, who made an expedition to the African coast in 1562.[2] Scarcely anyone seems to have regarded the trade as wrong. According to the

[1] The first writer who undertook the defence of Las Casas was Grégoire, Bishop of Blois, in a paper read before the French Institute in 1804, and the subject was afterwards treated, though in a rather different point of view, in a letter by a Mexican priest named Don Gregorio Funes, and in an essay by Llorente. They are reprinted, together with translations of all the relevant passages from Herrera (the original authority on the subject), in Llorente's edition of the works of Las Casas (1822). The first of these writers attempted to impugn the authority of Herrera, but for this there seems no sufficient reason; nor does it appear that Herrera, or indeed anyone else at the time, considered the conduct of Las Casas wrong. The monks of St. Jerome are much more responsible for the introduction of negroes than Las Casas. It is impossible to read the evidence Llorente has collected without feeling that, as a general rule (with a few striking exceptions), the Spanish clergy laboured earnestly to alleviate the condition of the captive Indians, that this was one of their chief reasons in advocating the import of negroes, and that they never contemplated the horrors that soon grew out of the trade. It should be added that the Spanish Dominican Soto was perhaps the first man who unequivocally condemned that trade.

[2] M'Pherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. ii. p. 638. At a much later period, in 1689, the English made a convention with Spain to supply the West Indies with slaves from Jamaica.

popular sentiment of Christendom there was such an amazing, I might almost say generical, difference between those who were Christians and those who were not, that to apply to the latter the principles that were applied to the former, would have been deemed a glaring paradox. If the condition of the negroes in this world was altered for the worse, it was felt that their prospects in the next were greatly improved. Besides, it was remembered that, shortly after the deluge, Ham had behaved disrespectfully to his drunken father, and it was believed by many that the Almighty had, in consequence, ordained negro slavery. The Spanish were not in general bad masters. On the contrary, when the gold fever had begun to subside, they were in this respect distinguished for their humanity;[1] and their laws on the subject still present, in some points, a favourable contrast to those of America; but the effect of slavery upon the national character was not the less great.

Besides these considerations, we must take into account the great acts of religious intolerance of which Spain was guilty, and which recoiled with fatal effect upon her industrial system. Never did a people verify more fully the great truth, that industry and fanaticism are deadly foes. Four times the Spanish nation directed all its energies in the cause of the Church, and four times its prosperity received a wound from which it has never recovered. By the expulsion of the Jews, Spain was deprived of all her greatest financiers, and of almost all her most enterprising merchants. By the expulsion of the Moors,

[1] This was noticed by Bodin in his time. See *La République*, p. 47 (1577).

the full effects of this policy[1] were manifested. Manufactures had languished. Prices were immensely raised. Confusion and insecurity characterised every financial undertaking. The Spaniards, to adopt the image of a great political economist, realising the curse of Midas, found all the necessaries of life transmuted into gold, while, to crown all, the government prohibited its export under pain of death.

These economical causes will help to show why it was that the material prosperity of the great Catholic power was so transient, and also why no strong industrial spirit was evoked to counteract the prevailing fanaticism. This last fact will be still further elucidated, if we consider the social and religious institutions which Spanish Catholicity encouraged. The monasteries, in numbers and wealth, had reached a point that had scarcely ever been equalled; and besides subtracting many thousand men and a vast amount of wealth from the productive resources of the country, they produced habits of mind that are altogether incompatible with industry. The spirit that makes men devote themselves in vast numbers to a monotonous life of asceticism and poverty is so essentially opposed to the spirit that creates the energy and enthusiasm of industry, that their continued co-existence may be regarded as impossible.

[1] Aggravated to a certain extent by the dishonest tampering with the coinage, in which Charles V., like most of the sovereigns of the time, indulged. The chief results of this are, first, that the good coins are driven out of circulation, as men naturally prefer giving the smallest value possible for what they purchase; secondly, nominal prices are raised as the intrinsic value of coins is depreciated; thirdly, all the evils of uncertainty, panic, and suffering inflicted upon creditors and persons with fixed incomes are produced.

Besides this, that aristocratic system which harmonises so well with a theological society revived. A warlike and idle nobility took the place of the old merchant nobles of Italy, and a stigma was in consequence attached to labour,[1] which was still further increased by the revival of slavery.

The resurrection of this last institution is usually ascribed to Las Casas, perhaps the most eminent philanthropist Spain ever produced. In this statement there is, however, some exaggeration. Las Casas only landed in America in 1513, and he does not appear to have taken any step on the subject of slavery till some years later; but negroes had been employed as slaves by the Portuguese in their colonies in the very beginning of the century,[2] and a certain number were introduced into the Spanish colonies as early as 1511. They do not, however, appear to have been fully recognised by the government, and further imports were discouraged till 1516, when the monks of St. Jerome, who then administered affairs in the West Indies, recommended their employment. In the following year, Las Casas pronounced energetically in the same sense. Strange as it may now appear, there can be no doubt that in doing so he was actuated by the purest benevolence. Perceiving that the wretched Indians, to whose service he had devoted his life, perished by thousands beneath the hard labour of the mines, while the negroes employed by

[1] See Blanqui, *Hist. de l'Économie politique*, tom. i. pp. 271–284, where the whole subject of the political economy of Charles V. is admirably treated.

[2] The beginning of the trade dates from 1440, in which year some Portuguese merchants having kidnapped some Moors on the coast of Africa, only consented to ransom them on receiving negroes in exchange. (Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. i. p. 661.)

of them were at length goaded into successful rebellion. In the last place, an undue amount of gold was introduced into Spain, which had the very natural, but, to the Spaniards, the very astonishing effect of convulsing the whole financial system of the country. For the value of gold, like the value of other commodities, is governed by the law of supply and demand; and the fact that this metal has been selected as the general instrument of exchange, while it makes any sudden alteration in its value peculiarly dangerous, does not in any degree remove it from the law. When it suddenly becomes too common, its value—that is to say, its purchasing power—is depreciated; or, in other words, the price of all other articles is raised. After a time things adjust themselves to the new standard, and many political economists, considering the sudden stimulus that is given to industry, the particular class of enterprises the change in the value of money specially favours, and still more its effect in lightening the pressure of national debts, have regarded it as ultimately a benefit; but, at all events, the confusion, insecurity, and uncertainty of the transition constitute a grave danger to the community, and the loss inflicted on certain classes [1] is extremely serious. In our own day, although the influx of Australian and Californian gold has told very sensibly upon prices, the immense area of enterprise over which it has been diffused, the counteracting influence of machinery in cheapening commodities, and also a few exceptional causes of demand,[2] have materially

[1] Those who directly or indirectly depend upon fixed incomes.

[2] According to Chevalier (whose book on this subject has been translated and en-

deadened the shock. But the stream of gold that was directed to Spain after the discovery of America produced nearly the full measure of evil, while the economical error of the age deprived the Spaniards of nearly all the good that might have been expected. The temporary evil of a violent change in prices could only have been abated, and the permanent evil of the decay of national industry could only have been in some degree compensated, by the free employment of American gold to purchase the industry of foreign nations; but this would involve the export of the precious metal, which the government under the severest penalties prohibited. It is true that, as no prohibition can finally arrest the natural flow of affairs, the gold did issue forth,[1] but it was in the manner that was least advantageous to Spain. Charles V. and Philip II. employed it in their wars; but wars are almost always detrimental to industry; many of these were disastrous in their conclusions, and those of Charles were undertaken much more in the interests of the empire than of Spain, while Philip sacrificed every other consideration to the advantage of the Church. The only other mode of egress was by infringing the law. After a few years,

dorsed by Mr. Cobden), the adoption of a gold standard by France is the principal.

[1] The famous sermon of Bishop Latimer, describing the revolution of prices in England, was preached as early as 1548, only twenty-seven years after the conquest of Mexico, and at a time when the *great* mines of Potosi (which were only discovered in 1545) could scarcely have had any effect upon Europe. The most striking evidence of the perturbation of prices in England in the sixteenth century is given in '*A Compendious or Briefe Examination of Certayne Ordinary Complaints of divers of our Countrymen, by W. S.*' [probably William Stafford], 1581. The greater part of this curious pamphlet has been reprinted in the fifth volume of the *Pamphleteer* (1815).

missionaries in the first years of the seventeenth century, and it was soon after largely imported by the Dutch. In 1636 we find it in usage in France, and enthusiastically patronised by the Chancellor Séguier. The earliest notice of it in England is in an Act of Parliament of 1660. The discovery of the circulation of blood, which produced an exaggerated estimate of the medical value of bleeding and of hot drinks, and the writings of two physicians named Tulpius and Bontekoe, gave a great impulse to its popularity. In a letter written in 1680, Madame de Sévigné observes that the Marchioness de la Sablière had just introduced the custom of drinking it with milk. About the middle of the same century, coffee began to pour in from Turkey. The properties of this berry had been noticed in 1591 by the Venetian physician Alpinus, and soon afterwards by Bacon in his 'Natural History,' and the drink was introduced into England in 1652 by an English Turkey merchant named Edwards. In France the first coffee-house was established at Marseilles in 1664. A few years later, Soliman Aga, the ambassador of Mahomet IV., made the new beverage very fashionable in Paris; and in 1672 an Armenian named Pascal established a coffee-house in that city. He had soon countless imitators; and it was observed that this new taste gave a serious and almost instantaneous check to drunkenness, which had been very prevalent in France. Coffee-houses were the true precursors of the clubs of the eighteenth century. They became the most important centres of society, and they gave a new tone to the national manners. In England, though they were once even more popular than in France, and though they are indissolubly

associated with one of the most brilliant periods of literary history, they have not taken root; but the effect of hot drinks upon domestic life has probably been even greater than on the Continent. Checking the boisterous revels that had once been universal, and raising woman to a new position in the domestic circle, they have contributed very largely to refine manners, to introduce a new order of tastes, and to soften and improve the character of men. They are therefore, I think, not unworthy of a passing notice in a sketch of the moral and intellectual consequences of commerce.[1]

When the Spanish supremacy was destroyed, what may be termed the commercial antagonism of the two religions ceased. England and Holland were long the leaders of commerce; and if Catholic nations have since distinguished themselves in that course, it has been when their zeal had grown languid and their system of policy been secularised. The general superiority in industry of Protestant countries has been constantly noticed and often explained. The suppression of monasteries, the discouragement of mendicity, and the construction of churches that were in no degree formed upon the ascetic principle, contributed to the progress; but perhaps the principal cause was the intellectual impulse communicated by the Reformation, which was felt in every field both of speculation and of action.[2]

[1] The fullest history of hot drinks I have met with is in a curious and learned book, D'Aussy, *Hist. de la Vie privée des Français* (Paris, 1815), tom. iii. pp. 116–129, which I have followed closely. See, too, Pierre Lacroix, *Histoire des anciennes Corporations*, p. 76; Pelletier, *Le Thé et le Café*; Cabanis, *Rapports du Physique et du Moral*, 8me Mémoire; and, for the English part of the history, M'Pherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. ii. pp. 447–489.

[2] I do not include among

But while the relative interests of Protestantism and Catholicism have not been very seriously involved in the history of industry since the seventeenth century, there is another form of antagonism which long after made that history a faithful mirror of theological progress. I mean the conflict between town and country, between the manufacturing and the agricultural interests. The question which of these two spheres of existence is most conducive to the happiness and the morality of mankind will, no doubt, always be contested; but the fact that they produce entirely different intellectual tendencies, both in religion and politics, will scarcely be disputed. The country is always the representative of stability, immobility, and reaction. The towns are the representatives of progress, innovation, and revolution. The inhabitants of the country may be very vicious; but even in the midst of their vice they will be extremely superstitious, extremely tenacious of the customs of religions that have elsewhere passed away, and especially addicted to that aspect of those religions which is most opposed to the spirit of Rationalism. All the old superstitions concerning witches, fairies, hereditary curses, prophetical dreams, magical virtues, lucky or unlucky days, places, or events, still linger among the poor; while even the

these causes the diminution of Church holidays, for, although in some few countries they may have degenerated into an abuse, the number of those that are compulsory has been grossly exaggerated; and moreover, their good effects in procuring some additional recreation for the working classes appear to me to have more than counterbalanced the injury they may have done to labour. There is some correspondence between Dr. Doyle and Lord Cloncurry on this subject, which is well worthy of attention, in Fitzpatrick's *Life of Doyle*.

educated are distinguished for the retrospective character of their minds, and for their extreme antipathy to innovation. The general character of great towns, and especially of manufacturing towns, is entirely different.[1] It is indeed true that the great subdivision of labour, while it is eminently favourable to the increase of wealth, is for a time unfavourable to the intellectual developement of the labourer; for the mind that is concentrated exclusively upon the manufacture of a single portion of a single object is far less happily circumstanced than if it were occupied with a complex subject which demands the exercise of all its faculties. But this disadvantage is more than compensated by the intellectual stimulus of association, and by the increased opportunities which greater rewards and steady progress produce. Certain it is that neither the virtues nor vices of great towns take the form of reaction in politics, or of superstition in religion. The past rests lightly, often too lightly, upon them. Novelty is welcomed, progress is eagerly pursued. Vague traditions are keenly criticised, old doctrines are disintegrated and moulded afresh by the individual judgment. Besides this, the manufacturing is also the commercial interest; and the great intellectual importance of commerce we have already seen. Such, then, being the opposite predispositions evoked by agricultural and manufacturing occupations, it becomes a matter of considerable interest and importance to trace the his-

[1] The difference between town and country in this respect has been fully noticed by Mr. Buckle (*Hist. of Civ.*, vol. i. pp. 344-347), who ascribes it chiefly to the fact that agriculturists are dependent for their success upon atmospheric changes, which man can neither predict nor control.

tory of their comparative developement; and in order to do so it will be necessary to give a brief outline of the progress of economical opinion on the subject.

Before the dawn of a correct political economy in the eighteenth century, Europe was for the most part divided between two doctrines on the subject of commerce. Both schools regarded money as the single form of wealth; but, according to one of them, commerce should be altogether discouraged, as at best a dangerous and a gambling speculation; while, according to the other, it should be pursued as the chief method of acquiring wealth, but only on the condition of the exports exceeding the imports. The first of these schools usually discouraged manufactures, and concentrated its attention upon agriculture; the other was eminently favourable to manufactures. Before the sixteenth century, the notions of the first school, without being systematised or formally stated, were very generally diffused: politicians laboured to make each nation entirely self-subsisting; and there was an antipathy, or at least a disinclination, to any speculation that involved an export of gold, even with the eventual object of obtaining a larger supply in return.[1] Besides this, the rude simplicity of manners which made the demand for manufactured goods very small, the superstitions about usury which fell with crushing weight on industrial enterprise, the imperfection of the means of communication, the zeal with which the monks pursued agriculture, the especial adaptation of that pursuit, on account of its comparative facility, to an early stage of civilisation, and the recollection of the peculiar honour in

[1] See M'Culloch's *Political Economy*, and his Introduction to the *Wealth of Nations*.

which it had been held by the ancients,—all tended in the same direction. With the exception of the Italian republics and the cities of the Hanseatic League, which had little or no land to cultivate, and were almost forced by their circumstances into commerce, agriculture was everywhere the dominant form of labour, and the habits of mind it created contributed much to colour, intensify, and perpetuate the mediæval superstitions.

When, however, the great discoveries of gold in America created in all nations an eager desire to obtain it, industry began to assume a new form and more gigantic proportions; and although, owing to causes which I have already traced, it languished in Spain, it was rapidly developed in other countries, and the opinions of statesmen on the subject were steadily modified. Sully was probably the last minister of very considerable abilities who systematically opposed manufactures as an evil. The opposite opinion, which regarded them as the most efficient magnet of foreign gold, found its greatest representative in Colbert;[1] and although the ruinous wars of Louis XIV., and still more the revocation of the Edict

[1] See Blanqui. In England the mercantile system began under the influence of the East India Company, which, in 1600, obtained permission to export the precious metals to the amount of 30,000*l.* per annum, on the condition that within six months of every expedition (except the first) the Company should import an equal sum. Under Henry VIII., and more than once at an earlier period, all exportation of the precious metals had been forbidden. The restrictive laws on this subject were repealed in 1663 (M'Culloch's *Introd. Discourse*). The two most eminent English defenders of the mercantile system — Thomas Mun, whose *Treasure by Foreign Trade* was published in 1664, and Sir Josiah Child, whose *New Discourse of Trade* was published in 1668—both wrote in the interests of the East India Company.

of Nantes, in a great measure counteracted his efforts; although, too, the ultimate effects of the protective system have been extremely detrimental to industry; there can be little doubt that this minister did more than any preceding statesman to make manufactures a prominent form of European industry. He removed many of the impositions under which they suffered, protected their interests whenever they were menaced, and did all that lay in his power to encourage their developement.

Indeed, at first sight, the school which followed that of Colbert, though in reality an immense step in advance, might appear less favourable to the manufacturing interests. The economists—as Quesnay, and those very able writers and statesmen who adopted his opinions, were termed—were not simply the precursors of political economy; they were the actual founders of many parts of it; and though their system, as a whole, has perished, and their fame been eclipsed by the great thinker of Scotland, they will always form one of the most important links in the history of the science. Perhaps their principal achievement was the repudiation of the old doctrine that all wealth consisted of gold—a doctrine which, having lighted up the labours of the alchemists, and inspired all the Eldorado dreams of the middle ages, had become the cardinal principle of commercial legislation.[1] Almost at the

[1] The earliest writer who very clearly expounded the true nature of money was probably Bishop Berkeley, whose *Querist*, considering that it was written in 1735, is one of the most remarkable instances of political sagacity of the age; far superior in this respect, I think, to the economical writings of Locke. Berkeley very nearly broke loose from the system of 'the balance of commerce.' The following queries are a curious example of the struggles of an acute reason against this universal error:—

'Whether that trade should

same time, and about twenty-five years before the publication of 'The Wealth of Nations,' this doctrine was assailed, and the possibility of the increase of wealth being in inverse proportion to the increase of gold was asserted, by Hume in England, and by Quesnay in France. But while the French economists perceived very clearly the mistake of their predecessors, when they came to establish their own doctrine they fell into an error which is a striking illustration of the difficulty with which, in one stage of progress, even the most acute minds rise to truths which in another stage appear perfectly self-evident. Nothing, according to their view, can really add to the national wealth which does not call new matter into existence, or at least introduce it to the service of men. Mines, fisheries, and agriculture fulfil these conditions, and consequently add to the national wealth. Manufactures, simply giving matter a new form, though they are extremely useful to the community, and though they may enable an individual to augment his portion of the national wealth, can never increase the great total. Practically, therefore, for

not be accounted most pernicious, wherein the balance is most against us? and whether this be not the trade of France?' 'Whether the annual trade between Italy and Lyons be not about four millions in favour of the former, and yet whether Lyons be not a gainer by this trade?' 'Whether the general rule of determining the profit of a commerce by its balance doth not, like other rules, admit of exceptions?' 'Whether it would not be a monstrous folly to import nothing but gold and silver, supposing we might do it, from every foreign part to which we trade?' 'Whether he must not be a wrong-headed patriot or politician whose ultimate view was drawing money into a country and keeping it there?' (*Querist*, 161, 555, 556, 557, 559.)

Berkeley is an example of, perhaps, the rarest form of genius—that which is equally adapted for political speculation, and for the most subtle and supersensuous regions of metaphysics.

the great majority of nations, agriculture is the single source of wealth; all manufactures are ultimately salaried by it, and its encouragement should be the main object of judicious policy. Raynal, it is true, in this matter separated from the rest of the school. He saw that manufactures invested the raw material with new qualities, and making it the object of new demand increased its value; but at this point he stopped.[1] Agriculture and industry he regarded as both sources of national wealth, but not so commerce. Forgetting that an article may be far more valuable in a country into which it is imported than in that in which it is indigenous, and that when the costs incident upon transport have been deducted from this excess, the remainder is a pure gain, he maintained that commerce, being simply displacement, could not increase the general wealth.

These doctrines were undoubtedly in some respects very unfavourable to manufactures, yet their consequences were not as evil as might have been expected. In the first place, the economists were unwittingly guilty of a grievous injustice to their favourite pursuit. All taxation, they believed, should be levied upon the net gains of the country; and as those gains were exclusively due to agriculture, they concluded, as Locke on somewhat different grounds had concluded in the preceding century, that the proprietors of the soil should bear the entire burden. Besides this, the economists, as the first great opponents of the mercantile theory, were on all occasions the advocates of free trade, the subverters of every form of monopoly, the reformers of all the means of communication. By

[1] Say, *Traité d'Économie politique*, liv. i. ch. 2.

the ministry of Turgot, and by the legislation of the revolutionary parliaments, such countless abuses of detail were swept away, and so many useful measures recommended, that it may be truly said that manufactures owe more to them than to any preceding legislators.

At last Adam Smith appeared; and while he effectually destroyed all that part of the doctrine of the economists which was hostile to manufactures, he established upon the firm basis of demonstration, and developed and irradiated with matchless skill, all that was most favourable to their progress. Proving that labour was the basis of value, that money is but a single form of merchandise which has been selected as the instrument of exchange, and that the goods of foreign countries are eventually purchased by native productions—unravelling by a chain of the clearest but most subtle reasoning the functions of capital, the manner in which it is created by the combination of parsimony with industry, and the special facilities which manufactures and the division of labour of which they admit offer for its increase—giving, too, a fatal blow to the system of restrictions by which statesmen had long imagined that they could promote the interests of wealth,—Adam Smith performed the double service of dispelling the notion that manufactures are useless or pernicious, and unfolding the true laws that regulate their prosperity. Generation after generation, and almost year by year, his principles have penetrated more deeply into the policy of Europe; and generation after generation, manufactures, freed from their old shackles, acquire a greater expansion, and the habits of thought which they produce a corresponding importance.

It is, however, an extremely remarkable fact, as showing the tenacity with which the doctrines of the 'economists' clung to the mind, that even Adam Smith thought it necessary, in classifying the sources of wealth, to reserve for agriculture a position of special prominence, as the most abundant of these sources.[1] He arrived at this conclusion, not from any observation of what had actually taken place, but from two general considerations. In manufactures, he contended, wealth is produced by the unaided toil of man, whereas in agriculture nature co-operates with human exertions. Besides this, agriculture, unlike other pursuits, in addition to wages and profit, can furnish a rent. The first of these statements, as has often been observed, is palpably inaccurate, for nature is in many instances extremely serviceable to the manufacturer; as, for example, when steam or water puts his machinery in motion. The second argument lost its force when Ricardo discovered the true cause of rent, proving that it is a sign of the limited productivity of the soil, and not of its superiority to other sources of wealth.[2]

[1] *Wealth of Nations*, book ii. ch. 5.

[2] As long as the good land to be cultivated is practically unlimited relatively to the population, no rent is paid. When, however, the best land no longer sufficiently supplies the wants of an increased population, it will still continue to be cultivated; but it will be necessary also to cultivate land of an inferior quality. The cost of the production of a given quantity of the best corn will necessarily be greater when derived from the latter than when derived from the former; but when brought to the market, all corn of the same quality will bear the same price, and that price will be regulated by the cost of production which is greatest (for no one would cultivate the bad land if the sale of its produce did not compensate for his outlay), so that in the sale of corn of the same quality at the same price, the profits of the possessors of the good, will be greater than the profits of the possessors of

But while this steady modification of economical opinions in favour of manufactures is one great cause of the progress of the latter, it would probably have been insufficient, but for the co-operation of two other influences. The first of these was the system of credit. This remarkable agency, which has long proved one of the great moralising influences of society, by the immense importance it has bestowed upon character, and one of the great pledges of peace, by the union it has established between different nations, and, at the same time, the most powerful of all the engines of warfare, is chiefly due to the industrial genius of Holland; for though some traces of it may be found among the Jews and the Italian republics of the middle ages, the system was not duly organised till the establishment of the bank of Amsterdam in 1609. The immediate object was to increase the amount of money in circulation, and thus give a new impetus to industry; and within certain limits, and subject to certain dangers, which we have not now to consider, it has fully answered its end.

The second influence is the rapid developement of mechanical contrivances. Strictly speaking, machinery dates from the rudest instrument by which men tilled the soil; but its higher and more elaborate achievements are always the product of civilisation, upon which, in turn, they powerfully react. The most important machine invented, or at least introduced into Europe, in the middle ages, was probably the windmill,[1] which was an agent in the agricultural

the bad land. This difference is the origin of rent, which is, therefore, not a primal element of agriculture, and which has not, as Adam Smith supposed, any influence on price.

[1] The earliest European notice of windmills is, I believe,

interests. In the fifteenth century, a machine for printing transformed the intellectual condition of Europe. In the nineteenth century, the machines of Watt, Arkwright, and Stephenson, and the many minor inventions that are subsidiary to them, have given an impulse both to commerce and manufactures which is altogether unparalleled in the history of mankind. In addition to the necessary difficulties connected with the introduction of a new form of industry, every step of the progress of machines was met by a fierce opposition, directed at one time by the ablest statesmen,[1] and long afterwards sustained by the lower classes, who very naturally regarded these inventions as prejudicial to their interests. And, certainly, the first result of machinery, by economising the labour of production, is to throw a vast number of the poor out of employment, and to reduce, by increased concurrence, the wages of the remainder. The second is to diminish the price of the article of manufacture, to the benefit of the consumer; and in most cases this depreciation leads to an immense extension of demand, which necessitates a multiplication of machines, and usually continues till the number of persons employed is immeasurably greater than before the machinery had been introduced. At the same time, this increased facility of production and this increased demand produce an accumulation of capital far more rapid than had previously taken place; which, as the rate of wages depends entirely upon the proportion national capital

to be found in a charter of William, Count of Mortain (grandson of William the Conqueror), dated 1105, which has been published by Mabillon. They are supposed to have been brought from Asia Minor. (D'Aussy, *La Vie privée des Français*, tom. i. pp. 62, 63.)

[1] Amongst others, Colbert.

bears to the labouring classes, among whom it is to be divided, is a main condition of the material prosperity of the latter. Even in those instances in which, from the nature of the case, the demand for the manufactured article cannot be so extended as to compensate for the loss of employment which the introduction of machinery occasions, although the passing evils are very great, the change is usually an advantage; for economical production implies increasing wealth, and the capital gained in one department finds its outlet in others.

There are, no doubt, other effects of machinery which are serious drawbacks to these advantages—some of them inherent in this mode of production, some of them partly or altogether due to the process of transition. Such are the great increase of the inequalities of fortune which results from the absorption of all production by colossal manufactures, the unnatural multiplication and agglomeration of population they occasion, the sudden and disastrous fluctuations to which manufacturing industry is peculiarly liable, the evil effects it frequently exercises upon health, and the temptation to employ young children in its service. All these points have given rise to much animated discussion, which it does not fall within the province of the present work to review; but at all events it is unquestionable that, for good or for evil, the invariable effect of modern machinery has been to increase the prominence of manufactures, to multiply the number of those engaged in them, and, therefore, in the opposition of tendencies that exists between the agricultural and manufacturing classes, to incline the balance in favour of the latter.

Beyond all other nations, England has been in this

respect distinguished. Both in the intellectual and in the mechanical influences I have reviewed, she stands without a rival; for with, I think, the exception of Say, France has not produced any political economist of great original powers since Turgot; and America, notwithstanding her rare mechanical genius, is as yet unable to boast of a Watt or a Stephenson. It is not surprising that a land which has attained this double supremacy, and which possesses at the same time almost unlimited coal-mines, an unrivalled navy, and a government that can never long resist the natural tendency of affairs, should be pre-eminently the land of manufactures. In no other country are the intellectual influences connected with them so powerful; and the constant increase of the manufacturing population is rapidly verifying, in a sense that should not be restricted to politics, the prediction of Mr. Cobden, that eventually 'the towns must govern England.'[1]

In the preceding examination of the ways in which the successive evolutions of European industry have reflected or influenced the history of belief, I have often had occasion to refer to the different branches of political economy in their relation to different aspects of industrial progress. It remains for me now to consider in a more general point of view the theological consequences of this great science, which has probably done more than any other to reveal the

[1] There are some striking, though now rather ancient, statistics on this point in Babbage *On Machines*, ch. i. In 1830, the non-cultivators were in Italy as 31 to 100; in France, as 50 to 100; in England, as 200 to 100. During the first thirty years of the century, the population of England increased about fifty-one per cent.; that of the great towns, 123 per cent.

true physiology of society. For although political economists, and especially those of England, have often endeavoured to isolate the phenomena of wealth, all such attempts have proved entirely futile. Even Adam Smith lighted up an immense series of moral and social interests by his science. Malthus, opening out the great question of population, immensely increased its range; and it is now impossible to be imbued with the leading writings on the subject without forming certain criteria of excellence, certain general conceptions of the aim and laws of human progress, that cannot be restricted to material interests. I shall endeavour, without entering into any minute details, to sketch the general outlines of these conceptions, and to show in what respects they harmonise or clash with theological notions.

The first important consequence of political economy I have in some degree anticipated in the last chapter. It is to contribute largely towards the realisation of the great Christian conception of universal peace. The history of the fortunes of that conception in the hands of theologians is profoundly melancholy. Though peace upon earth was at first proclaimed as a main object of Christianity, and though for about three centuries the Christian disciples displayed unwearied zeal and amazing heroism in advocating it, the sublime conception of a moral unity gradually faded away before the conception of a unity of ecclesiastical organisation, and for many centuries theologians were so far from contributing to the suppression of war, that they may be justly regarded as its chief fomenters. Certain it is, that the period when the Catholic Church exercised a supreme ascendency, was also the period in which

Europe was most distracted by wars; and that the very few instances in which the clergy exerted their gigantic influence to suppress them, are more than counterbalanced by those in which they were the direct causes of the bloodshed. Indeed, they almost consecrated war by teaching that its issue was not the result of natural agencies, but of supernatural interposition. As the special sphere of Providential action, it assumed a holy character, and success became a proof, or at least a strong presumption, of right. Hence arose that union between the sacerdotal and the military spirit which meets us in every page of history; the countless religious rites that were interwoven with military proceedings; the legends of visible miracles deciding the battle; the trial by combat, which the clergy often wished to suppress, but which nevertheless continued for centuries, because all classes regarded the issue as the judicial decision of the Deity. When these superstitions in some measure decayed, the religious wars began. The bond of Catholic unity, which was entirely insufficient to prevent wars between Catholic nations, proved powerful enough to cause frightful convulsions when it was assailed; and one of the most faithful measures of the decay of theological influences has been the gradual cessation of the wars they produced.

The inadequacy of theological systems as a basis of European tranquillity having been clearly proved by the experience of many centuries, there arose in the eighteenth century a school which attempted to establish this tranquillity by a purely intellectual process—by giving intellectual pursuits and political principles a decisive predominance over the military

spirit. I allude to the French philosophers, who in this as in many other respects were simply endeavouring to realise in their own way one of the great ideal conceptions of Christianity. They arose at a period well suited to the enterprise. France was wearied, exhausted, and almost ruined by the long wars of Lewis XIV. The prestige that Condé and Turenne had cast upon the French arms had perished beneath the still greater genius of Marlborough. An intense intellectual life had arisen, accompanied by all the sanguine dreams of youth. Voltaire, after coquetting for a short time with the military spirit, threw himself cordially into the cause of peace. He employed all his amazing abilities and all his unrivalled influence to discredit war, and, with the assistance of his followers, succeeded in establishing the closest union between the intellects of France and England, and in replacing the old theological and military antipathy by the sympathy of common aspirations.

But a few years passed away and all this was changed. The long and terrible wars that were the speedy consequence of the French Revolution, and the pernicious genius of Napoleon, evoked all the reactionary influences in Europe, revived the military spirit in its full intensity, and plunged the greater part of the civilised world into the agonies of a deadly struggle.

There can, I think, be little doubt that there is a tendency in civilisation to approximate towards the ideal of the French philosophers. It can hardly be questioned that the advance of intellectual culture produces a decline of the military spirit, and that the cohesion resulting from a community of principles and intellectual tendencies is slowly superseding

artificial political combinations. But at the same time it is no less certain that the bond of intellectual sympathy alone is far too weak to restrain the action of opposing passions, and it was reserved for political economy to supply a stronger and more permanent principle of unity.

This principle is an enlightened self-interest. Formerly, as I have said, the interests of nations were supposed to be diametrically opposed. The wealth that was added to one was necessarily taken from another; and all commerce was a kind of balance, in which a gain on one side implied a corresponding loss on the opposite one. Every blow that was struck to the prosperity of one nation was of advantage to the rest, for it diminished the number of those among whom the wealth of the world was to be divided. Religion might indeed interpose and tell men that they ought not to rejoice in the misfortunes of others, and that they should subordinate their interests to higher considerations; but still each people, as far as it followed its selfish interests, was hostile to its neighbour;[1] and even in the best ages the guiding principles of large bodies of men are almost always selfish. Independently of the many wars that were directly occasioned by a desire to alter commercial relations, there was a constant smouldering ill-feeling created by the sense of habitual antagonism, which the slightest difference kindled into a flame.

For this great evil political economy is the only

[1] Even Voltaire said, 'Telle est la condition humaine, que souhaiter la grandeur de son pays c'est souhaiter du mal à ses voisins. . . . Il est clair qu'un pays ne peut gagner sans qu'un autre perd.' (*Dict. phil.*, art. *Patrie.*)

corrective. It teaches, in the first place, that the notion that a commercial nation can only prosper by the loss of its neighbour, is essentially false. It teaches still further that each nation has a direct interest in the prosperity of that with which it trades, just as a shopman has an interest in the wealth of his customers. It teaches too that the different markets of the world are so closely connected, that it is quite impossible for a serious derangement to take place in any one of them without its evil effects vibrating through all; and that, in the present condition of Europe, commercial ties are so numerous, and the interests of nations so closely interwoven, that war is usually an evil even to the victor. Each successive developement of political economy has brought these truths into clearer relief, and in proportion to their diffusion must be the antipathy to war, the desire to restrict it, when it does break out, as far as possible to those who are actually engaged, and the hostility to all who have provoked it. Every fresh commercial enterprise is therefore an additional guarantee of peace.

I know that, in the present day, when Europe is suffering to an almost unexampled extent from the disquietude resulting from the conflict between opposing principles and unequal civilisations, speculations of this kind must appear to many unreal and utopian. Most assuredly, as long as nations tolerate monarchs who, resting upon the traditions of an effete theocracy, regard their authority as of divine right, and esteem it their main duty to arrest by force the political developements of civilisation, so long must standing armies and wars of opinion continue. Nor would the most sanguine political economist venture

to predict a time in which the sword would be altogether unknown. The explosions of passion are not always restrained by the most evident ties of interest; exceptional circumstances counteract general tendencies; and commerce, which links civilised communities in a bond of unity, has ever forced her way among barbarians by bloodshed and by tyranny. But in order to justify the prospect of a great and profound change in the relations of European nations, it is only necessary to make two postulates. The first is, that the industrial element which, in spite of legislative restrictions and military perturbations, is advancing every year with accelerated rapidity, is destined one day to become the dominant influence in politics. The second is, that those principles of political economy which are now acknowledged to be true by everyone who has studied them, will one day be realised as axioms by the masses. Amid the complications and elaborations of civilisation, the deranging influence of passion, whether for good or for evil, becomes continually less, and interest becomes more and more the guiding influence, not perhaps of individuals, but of communities. In proportion to the commercial and industrial advancement of a nation, its interests become favourable to peace, and the love of war is in consequence diminished. When therefore the different states of Europe are closely interwoven by commercial interests, when the classes who represent those interests have become the guiding power of the state, and when they are fully penetrated with the truth that war in any quarter is detrimental to their prosperity, a guarantee for the peace of Europe will have been attained, if not perfect, at least far stronger than any which either religion or

philanthropy has yet realised. In such a condition of commercial activity, and in such a condition of public knowledge, a political transformation would necessarily ensue, and the principal causes of present perturbations would be eliminated. At the same time two kindred movements which I have already noticed—the recognition of the principle of the rights of nationalities as the basis of political morality, and the growing ascendency of intellectual pursuits diminishing the admiration of military glory—would consolidate the interests of peace. Many years must undoubtedly elapse before such a condition of society can be attained; torrents of blood must yet be shed before the political obstacles shall have been removed, before the nationalities which are still writhing beneath a foreign yoke shall have been relieved, and before advancing knowledge shall have finally destroyed those theological doctrines concerning the relations between sovereigns and nations which are the basis of some of the worst tyrannies that are cursing mankind;[1] but as surely as civilisation advances, so surely must the triumph come. Liberty, industry, and peace are in modern societies indissolubly connected, and their ultimate ascendency depends upon a movement which may be retarded, but cannot possibly be arrested.

It should be observed, too, that while the nations which are most devoted to industrial enterprise are the most wealthy and the most pacific, they are also, as a general rule, those which are most likely to wield the greatest power in war. This, as Adam Smith has acutely observed, is one of the most important differences between ancient and modern societies. Formerly, when war depended almost entirely upon

[1] Written in 1863.

unaided valour, the military position of a rich nation was usually unfavourable; for while its wealth enervated its character and attracted the cupidity of its neighbours, it did not in the hour of strife furnish it with advantages at all commensurate with these evils. Hence the ruin of Carthage, Corinth, and Tyre, the great centres of commercial activity among the ancients. Since, however, the invention of gunpowder and the elaboration of military machinery, war has become in a great measure dependent upon mechanical genius, and above all upon financial prosperity, and the tendency of the balance of power is therefore to incline steadily to the nations that are most interested in the preservation of peace.

The influence political economy exercises in uniting different communities by the bond of a common interest, is also felt in the relations between the different classes of the same community. It is indeed no exaggeration to say, that a wide diffusion of the principles of the science is absolutely essential, if democracy is to be other than a fearful evil. For when the masses of the poor emerge from the torpor of ignorance, and begin keenly to examine their position in the gradations of society, property is almost certain to strike them as an anomaly and an injustice. From the notion that all men are born free and equal, they will very speedily pass to the conviction that all men are born with the same title to the goods that are in the world. Paley may have been wrong in regarding general utility as the ultimate basis of the rights of property, but most assuredly no other will obtain the respect of those who, themselves struggling with poverty, have obtained a supreme authority in the state. The long series of measures directly or in-

directly infringing on the rights of property that have disgraced the democracy of France,[1] and the notion of the natural hostility of capital and labour which is so general among the labouring classes on the Continent, are sufficient to cause a profound disquietude to those who have convinced themselves that democracy is the ultimate form of political developement. Political economy, and political economy alone, can remedy the evil. It does not indeed teach the optimism or the fatalism that some have imagined, and there can be little question that its ascendency must give in many respects new directions to the channel of wealth, repressing forms of expenditure which have long been regarded as peculiarly honourable, and which will be regarded in a very different light when they are universally acknowledged to be useless or detrimental to society.[2] Nor does it teach

[1] There is a full description of these in Chevalier's *Lettres sur l'Organisation du Travail*—a very able, and, considering that it was written in 1848, a very courageous book.

[2] The main interest of the poor is that as large a proportion as possible of the national wealth should be converted into capital, or, in other words, diverted from unproductive to productive channels. Wealth in the form of diamonds or gold ornaments, retained only for ostentation, has no effect upon wages. Wealth expended in feasts or pageants does undoubtedly directly benefit those who furnish them, but is of no ultimate good to the community, because the purchased article perishes unproductively by the use. Were the sums expended in these ways devoted to productive sources, they would, after each such employment, be reproduced, and become again available for the purposes of society; and those who now gain their living in supplying what is useless to mankind would betake themselves to the enlarged field of productive enterprise. But this train of reasoning should be corrected by the following considerations: 1st, wealth is a mean, and not an end, its end being happiness; and therefore mere accumulation, with no further object, is plainly irrational. Some modes of expenditure (such as public amusements) which rank very low indeed when judged by

that the interests of rich and poor are identical in such a sense that the wages of the workman and the profits of his employer must rise and fall together, the fact being rather the reverse. Nor, again, that a government is altogether impotent in regulating the distribution of wealth, for the laws of succession and the direction given to taxation have in this respect a gigantic influence. What, however, it does prove is, that the wages of the labourer depend so necessarily upon the proportion between the sum that is provided for the payment of labour, and the number of those among whom it is divided, that all direct efforts of the government to cause the permanent elevation of wages are, in the end, prejudicial to the very class they are intended to benefit. It proves that the material prosperity of the working classes depends upon the increase of capital being more rapid than that of population, and that this can only be ensured, on the one hand, by the continence of the labourer guarding against excessive multiplication, and, on the other

one test, rank very high when judged by the other. The intensity, and the wide diffusion of enjoyment they produce, compensate for their transience. 2nd. There is such a thing as immaterial production. Expenditure in the domain of art or science, which adds nothing to the material wealth of the community, may not only produce enjoyment, but may become the source of enjoyment and improvement for all future time. 3rd. The great incentive to production is the desire to rise to the higher ranks, and the great attraction of those ranks to the majority of men is the ostentation that accompanies them; so that the expenditure which directly is unproductive may indirectly be highly productive. Besides this, we should consider the effects of sudden outbursts of luxury at different periods of history and its different influences upon morals. So stated, the question of the most advantageous expenditure is extremely complicated, and varies much with different circumstances. As a general rule, however, political economy tends to repress the luxury of ostentation.

hand, by the fullest encouragement of production, which implies the perfect protection of capitalists; for he who has no assurance that he may retain what he has accumulated, will either never accumulate, or will conceal his property unproductively. In other words, political economy demonstrates, beyond the possibility of doubt, that if the property of the rich were confiscated and divided among the poor, the measure would in the end be the most fearful catastrophe that could befall the latter.

This great truth, that, in a financial point of view, with a very few exceptions, each nation, trade, or profession is interested in the prosperity of every other, has been growing clearer and clearer with each new developement of political economy,[1] and cannot fail to exercise a vast moral influence upon society. For though concurrence of action based solely upon community of interests, considered in itself, has no moral value, its effect in destroying some of the principal causes of dissension is extremely important. And, indeed, human nature is so constituted, that it is impossible for bodies of men to work together under the sense of a common interest without a warm feeling of amity arising between them. Common aims and hopes knit them together by a bond of sympathy. Each man becomes accustomed to act with a view to the welfare of others, and a union of affections usually replaces or consecrates the

[1] At least till Say, whose *Théorie des Débouchés* (directed against the notion of a 'universal glut,' which was maintained in France by Sismondi and in England by Malthus) may be regarded as the highest demonstration of the truth. The first writer who intimated the identity of the interests of nations engaged in commerce was probably Dudley North, in his famous work on Commerce, published in 1691.

union of interests. The sentiment thus evoked is undoubtedly a moral sentiment; and if it is not so powerful as that which is elicited by agencies appealing directly to enthusiasm, it is more general, more uniform, and perhaps, on the whole, not less beneficial to mankind.

It would be easy to show that political economy, by revealing the true causes of national prosperity, has effected, or is effecting, a considerable alteration in many of our moral judgments. Such, for example, is the change in the relative position in the moral scale of prodigality and avarice, of youthful indiscretions, and of imprudent marriages; and such too are the important modifications introduced into the conception of charity by the writings of Defoe, of Ricci, and of Malthus. It will, however, be sufficient for my present purpose, to indicate the predominating bias which these speculations produce, in order to ascertain the class of opinions and the tone of philosophy they are most likely to favour. On this point there can be little doubt. It has been again and again recognised that political economy represents the extreme negation of asceticism.

What may be termed the ascetic and the industrial philosophies have at all times formed two of the most important divisions of human opinions; and as each brings with it a vast train of moral and intellectual consequences, their history touches almost every branch of intellectual progress. The watchword of the first philosophy is mortification; the watchword of the second is developement. The first seeks to diminish, and the second to multiply, desires; the first, acknowledging happiness as a condition of the mind, endeavours to attain it by acting directly on the

mind, the second by acting on surrounding circumstances. The first, giving a greater intensity to the emotions, produces the most devoted men; the second, regulating the combined action of society, produces the highest social level. The first has proved most congenial to the Asiatic and Egyptian civilisations, and the second to the civilisations of Europe.

From the beginning of the fourth century, when the monastic system was first introduced from Egypt into Christendom,[1] until near the Reformation, the ascetic theory was everywhere predominant. The movement that was provoked by the examples of St. Antony and St. Pachomius, and by the writings of St. Jerome and St. Basil, received its full organisation about two centuries later from St. Benedict. The Crusades and St. Bernard produced the military orders; the teaching of St. Bruno, the Carthusians; the religious struggle of the thirteenth century, the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carmelites;[2] the conflict of the Reformation, the Theatines and the Jesuits. With the exception of the last century, during which some opposition had arisen to the monks, this long space of time represents the continuous elevation

[1] The Therapeutes mentioned by Philo (*De Vitâ Contemplativâ*) were probably pagans; and, indeed, in Asia and Africa the monastic type has always existed, and has assumed forms very similar to that among Christians. The horrible macerations of the Buddhists rival those of any Christian sect, and the antipathy to the fair sex is nearly as great among the pagan as among the Christian anchorites. Some pagan religionists of Siam made it a rule never to keep hens, because those animals are of the female sex. (Bayle, *Nouvelles Lettres*, lettre xxi.) Some Christians of Syria, with equal wisdom, resolved never to eat the flesh of any female animal. (*Ibid.*)

[2] The Carmelites had existed before upon Mount Carmel, and had even traced their origin to the prophet Elijah; but they were transferred to Europe, reorganised, and greatly multiplied in the thirteenth century.

of the ascetic principle as the supreme type with which all forms of heroism naturally assimilated or coalesced.

If we compare this period with the last three centuries, the contrast is very evident. Formerly, asceticism represented the highest point of moral dignity, and in exact proportion as a society was stimulated towards its conception of excellence the monasteries were multiplied. At present, the abolition of monasteries is an invariable concomitant of an advancing civilisation, the immediate consequence of every important movement of national progress. Protestantism was the first great protest against asceticism; but the process of confiscation which it initiated in the sixteenth century, and which was then regarded as the most horrible sacrilege, has since been imitated by almost every Catholic government in Europe. Not only France, at a time when she had repudiated Catholicism, but even Austria and Spain have pursued this course. No less than 184 monasteries were suppressed, and ecclesiastical property to the value of more than two millions of florins confiscated, by Joseph II. of Austria: 3,000 monasteries are said to have been suppressed in Europe between 1830 and 1835; 187 in Poland, in 1841.[1] And these acts, as well as those which have recently taken place in Italy, have been, for the most part, elicited by no scandals on the part of the monks, but were simply the expression of a public opinion which regarded the monastic life as essentially contemptible and disgraceful.

Of this industrial civilisation, political economy is the intellectual expression; and it is not too much to

[1] Montalembert, *Moines d'Occident*, Introd. pp. 199, 200

say, that it furnishes a complete theory of human progress directly opposed to the theory of asceticism. According to its point of view, the basis of all intellectual and social developement is wealth; for as long as men are so situated that all are obliged to labour for their sustenance, progress is impossible. An accumulation of capital is therefore the first step of civilisation, and this accumulation depends mainly on the multiplication of wants. When the inhabitants of any country are contented with what is barely sufficient for the support of life, they will only perform the minimum of labour; they will make no steady and sustained efforts to ameliorate their condition, and, as they will place little or no restraint upon multiplication, their numbers increasing more rapidly than the means of sustenance, the most frightful suffering must ensue. To raise that people from its barbarism, the first essential is to make it discontented with its condition. As soon as the standard of its necessities is raised, as soon as men come to regard as necessaries a certain measure of the comforts of life, habits of parsimony and self-restraint will be formed, and material progress will begin. But it is impossible for men by these means to satisfy their wants. The horizon of their ambition continually recedes. Each desire that is accomplished produces many others, and thus new exertions are elicited, and the progress of society secured. In the atmosphere of luxury that increased wealth produces, refined tastes, perceptions of beauty, intellectual aspirations appear. Faculties that were before dormant are evoked, new directions are given to human energies, and, under the impulse of the desire for wealth, men arise to supply each new want that wealth has pro-

duced. Hence, for the most part, arise art and literature, and science, and all the refinements and elaborations of civilisation, and all the inventions that have alleviated the sufferings or multiplied the enjoyments of mankind. And the same principle that creates civilisation creates liberty, and regulates and sustains morals. The poorer classes, as wealth, and consequently the demand for their labour, have increased, cease to be the helpless tools of their masters. Slavery, condemned by political economy, gradually disappears. The stigma that attached to labour is removed. War is repressed as a folly, and despotism as an invasion of the rights of property. The sense of common interests unites the different sections of mankind, and the conviction that each nation should direct its energies to that form of produce for which it is naturally most suited, effects a division of labour which renders each dependent upon the others. Under the influence of industrial occupations, passions are repressed, the old warlike habits are destroyed, a respect for law, a consideration for the interests of others, a sobriety and perseverance of character are inculcated. Integrity acquires a new value, and dissipation a new danger. The taste is formed to appreciate the less intense but more equable enjoyments, and the standard of excellence being rectified by the measure of utility, a crowd of imaginary virtues and vices which ignorance had engendered pass silently away.

This, or something like this, is the scheme of progress which political economy reveals. It differs essentially from the schemes of most moralists in the fact that its success depends not upon any radical change in the nature of mankind, not upon any of

those movements of enthusiasm which are always transient in their duration and restricted in their sphere, but simply upon the diffusion of knowledge. Taking human nature with all its defects, the influence of an enlightened self-interest first of all upon the actions and afterwards upon the character of mankind, is shown to be sufficient to construct the whole edifice of civilisation; and if that principle were withdrawn, all would crumble in the dust. The emulations, the jealousies, the conflicting sentiments, the insatiable desires of mankind, have all their place in the economy of life, and each successive development of human progress is evolved from their play and from their collision. When therefore the ascetic, proclaiming the utter depravity of mankind, seeks to extirpate his most natural passions, to crush the expansion of his faculties, to destroy the versatility of his tastes, and to arrest the flow and impulse of his nature, he is striking at the very force and energy of civilisation. Hence the dreary, sterile torpor that characterised those ages in which the ascetic principle has been supreme, while the civilisations which have attained the highest perfection have been those of ancient Greece and modern Europe, which were most opposed to it.

It is curious to observe by what very different processes the antipathy to asceticism was arrived at in these two periods. In the first it is to be ascribed mainly to the sense of the harmony of complete development, and above all to the passionate admiration of physical beauty which art contributed largely to sustain. The statues of the most lovely were then placed among the statues of the goddesses, and the athletic games made the symmetry and beauty of the manly frame the highest type of perfection. 'A

perfect mind in a perfect body' was the ideal of the philosopher, and the latter was considered almost a condition of the former. Harmonious sustained manhood, without disproportion, or anomaly, or eccentricity—that godlike type in which the same divine energy seems to thrill with equal force through every faculty of mind and body, the majesty of a single power never deranging the balance or impairing the symmetry of the whole, was probably more keenly appreciated and more frequently exhibited in ancient Greece than in any succeeding civilisation.

Among the moderns, on the other hand, the law of developement has been much more social than individual, and depends, as we have seen, on the growth of the industrial element. If we examine the history of the last few centuries, since the Italian republics revived commerce on a large scale, or since the Portuguese for the first time founded a great colonial empire in the interests of industrial enterprise,[1] we find that these interests have been steadily becoming supreme in all war, legislation, and diplomacy, and that the philosophy of utility, which is the most faithful expression of the industrial spirit, has attained a corresponding place in the sphere of thought. It

[1] Among the ancients the Phenician colonies, and a few others of less importance, were no doubt commercial, but the immense majority were due either to the love of migration, natural to a barbarous people, or to an excess of population, or to a desire when vanquished to escape servitude, or to a fear of invasion, or to the spirit of conquest. The substitution of the industrial for the military colonial system is one of the important changes in history, and on the whole, perhaps, it cannot be better dated than from the Portuguese colonial empire, which Vasco di Gama founded, and Albuquerque consolidated.

is supported by the ascendency of the inductive philosophy, which has always concentrated its efforts chiefly on material advantages. It is supported by the rapid diffusion through all classes of habits of thought derived from political life, which is the consequence of the extension of political liberty. It is supported too by the investigations of those great moralists who since Cumberland have been mainly employed in proving that virtue is a condition of happiness, from which men have illogically, but not unnaturally, inferred, that that which has no utility can have no moral value.[1]

The immense importance of utilitarianism in correcting the evils of fanaticism, in calling into action the faculties which asceticism had petrified, and in furnishing a simple, universal principle of life, has been clearly shown. Its capability of coalescing with received theological doctrines can hardly be doubtful to those who remember that Paley made it the corner-stone of his moral philosophy, maintaining that a hope of future reward was the natural principle of virtue. Indeed, one of the few political economists who have endeavoured to give their science a theological complexion, has argued that the laws of economical and of religious progress are identical, being self-denial for an end.[2] At the same time, the defects of such a system are sufficiently

[1] A great political economist, in a work which has now become very rare, says, 'Toute vertu qui n'a pas l'utilité pour objet immédiat me paraît futile, ridicule, pareille à cette perfection de Talapoin qui consiste à se tenir sur un seul pied plusieurs années de suite, ou dans quelque autre mortification nuisible à lui-même, inutile aux autres, et que son Dieu même doit regarder en pitié.' (J. B. Say, *Olbie*, p. 81.)

[2] Perin, *La Richesse dans les Sociétés chrétiennes*.

manifest, and they are in a great measure also the defects of rationalism. Utility is, perhaps, the highest motive to which reason can attain. The sacrifice of enjoyments and the endurance of sufferings become rational only when some compensating advantage can be expected. The conduct of that Turkish atheist,[1] who, believing that death was an eternal sleep, refused at the stake to utter the recantation which would save his life, replying to every remonstrance, 'Although there is no recompense to be looked for, yet the love of truth constraineth me to die in its defence,' in the eye of reason is an inexplicable folly; and it is only by appealing to a far higher faculty that it appears in its true light as one of the loftiest forms of virtue. It is from the moral or religious faculty alone that we obtain the conception of the purely disinterested. This is, indeed, the noblest thing we possess, the celestial spark that is within us, the impress of the divine image, the principle of every heroism. Where it is not developed, the civilisation, however high may be its general average, is maimed and mutilated.

In the long series of transformations we have reviewed, there are two which have been eminently favourable to this, the heroic side of human nature. The substitution of the philosophical conception of truth, for its own sake, for the theological conception of the guilt of error, has been in this respect a clear gain; and the political movement which has resulted chiefly from the introduction of the spirit of rationalism into politics, has produced, and is producing, some of the most splendid instances of self-sacrifice.

[1] Mahomet Effendi. See Bayle, *Pensées diverses*, § 182.

On the whole, however, it can hardly be doubted, that the general tendency of these influences is unfavourable to enthusiasm, and that both in actions and in speculations this tendency is painfully visible. With a far higher level of average excellence than in former times, our age exhibits a marked decline in the spirit of self-sacrifice, in the appreciation of the more poetical or religious aspect of our nature. The history of self-sacrifice during the last 1800 years, has been mainly the history of the action of Christianity upon the world. Ignorance and error have, no doubt, often directed the heroic spirit into wrong channels, and have sometimes even made it a cause of great evil to mankind; but it is the moral type and beauty, the enlarged conceptions and persuasive power of the Christian faith, that have, during many centuries, chiefly called it into being. The power of Christianity in this respect can only cease with the annihilation of the moral nature of mankind; but there are periods in which it is comparatively low. The decay of the old spirit of loyalty, the destruction of asceticism, and the restriction of the sphere of charity, which has necessarily resulted from the increased elaboration of material civilisation, represent successive encroachments on the field of self-sacrifice which have been very imperfectly compensated, and have given our age a mercenary, venal, and unheroic character, that is deeply to be deplored. A healthy civilisation implies a double action—the action of great bodies of men moving with the broad stream of their age, and eventually governing their leaders; and the action of men of genius or heroism upon the masses, raising them to a higher level, supplying them with nobler motives or more

comprehensive principles, and modifying, though not altogether directing, the general current. The first of these forms of action is now exhibited in great perfection. The second has but little influence in practice, and is almost ignored in speculation. The gradual evolution of societies, the organised action of great communities under the impulse of utilitarian motives, is admirably manifested; but great individualities act seldom and feebly upon the world. At the same time, the history of speculative philosophy exhibits a corresponding tone. There has always been an intimate connection between utilitarianism and those systems of metaphysics which greatly restrict and curtail the original powers of our nature, regarding the human mind as capable only of receiving, arranging, and transforming ideas that come to it from without. Those who hold that all our ideas are derived from sensation, will always, if they are consistent, make utility the ultimate principle of virtue, because by their system they can never rise to the conception of the purely disinterested;[1] and, on the other hand, it will be usually found that the sensual school and the materialism which it has produced, have arisen in periods when the standard of motives was low, and when heroism and pure enthusiasm had but little influence. In our present absolute ignorance of the immediate causes of life, and of the nature and limits of mind

[1] As Madame de Staël said, 'La morale fondée sur l'intérêt, si fortement prêchée par les écrivains français du dernier siècle, est dans une connexion intime avec la métaphysique, qui attribue toutes nos idées à des sensations' (*L'Allemagne*). I believe all who are conversant with the history of philosophy will acknowledge this to be profoundly true.

and matter, this consideration furnishes perhaps the most satisfactory arguments in favour of spiritualism; and it is as an index of the moral condition of the age that the prevalence of either spiritualism or materialism is especially important. At present, the tendency towards the latter is too manifest to escape the notice of any attentive observer. That great reaction against the materialism of the last century, which was represented by the ascendency of German and Scotch philosophies in England, and by the revival of Cartesianism in France, which produced in art a renewed admiration for Gothic architecture; in literature, the substitution of a school of poetry appealing powerfully to the passions and the imagination, for the frigid intellectualism of Pope or of Voltaire; and in religion, the deep sense of sin, displayed in different forms both by the early Evangelicals and by the early Tractarians, is everywhere disappearing. In England, the philosophy of experience, pushed to the extremes of Hume, and represented by the ablest living philosopher in Europe, has been rising with startling rapidity to authority, and has now almost acquired an ascendency in speculation. In France, the reaction against spiritualism and the tendency towards avowed materialism, as represented by the writings of Comte,[1] of Renan, and

[1] It is indeed true, that a first principle of the Positive school is the assertion that the limit of human faculties is the study of the successions of phenomena, and that we are therefore incapable of ascertaining their causes; and M. Littré, in his preface to the recent edition of Comte's works, has adduced this principle to show that Positivism is unaffected by arguments against materialism. As a matter of fact, however, the leading Positivists have been avowed materialists; the negation of the existence of metaphysics as a science distinct from physiology, which is one of their

of Taine, are scarcely less powerful than at the close of the last century; while, under the guidance of Schopenhauer and of Buchner, even Germany itself, so long the chosen seat of metaphysics, is advancing with no faltering steps in the same career.

This is the shadow resting upon the otherwise brilliant picture the history of Rationalism presents. The destruction of the belief in witchcraft and of religious persecution, the decay of those ghastly notions concerning future punishments, which for centuries diseased the imaginations and embittered the characters of men, the emancipation of suffering nationalities, the abolition of the belief in the guilt of error, which paralysed the intellectual, and of the asceticism, which paralysed the material, progress of mankind, may be justly regarded as among the greatest triumphs of civilisation; but when we look back to the cheerful alacrity with which, in some former ages, men sacrificed all their material and intellectual interests to what they believed to be right, and when we realise the unclouded assurance that was their reward, it is impossible to deny that we have lost something in our progress.

cardinal doctrines, implies, or all but implies, materialism; and the tendency of their school has, I think, of late years been steadily to substitute direct negations for scepticism. There are some good remarks on this in a very clear and able little book, called *Le Matérialisme contemporain*, by Paul Janet, a writer on whom (since Saisset died) the defence of Spiritualism in France seems to have mainly devolved.

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PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
LONDON

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018